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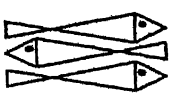
A Life of Thomas Jefferson

LEONARD WIBBERLEY



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Man of Liberty is also available in four volumes. The titles of these volumes have become the part titles of this book.

Author's Note

I find I have been three years in all (perhaps a trifle longer) doing the reading, the thinking, and the writing which have culminated in this biography of Thomas Jefferson for younger readers.

For younger readers? Yes. That was the intention. But I found, when this work first appeared (in four volumes), that many of my friends, themselves the fathers and mothers of grown families, enjoyed it. For the fact is that although the world knows Jefferson, and indeed knows the pinnacles of his achievement, not many (other than historians) know the whole of his story. So perhaps I should not say that this is a book for younger readers, but a book for those who want to know the story of Jefferson's life in some breadth, and something of the times in which he lived.

Jefferson was of course American and no other country can claim him. His parents on both sides came of American stock, long in this country. But the concepts of which he was the champion without parallel belong to all mankind, so that he is not merely a man of national importance but a man of international importance. No history of the world would be complete without plentiful reference to Thomas Jefferson. No history of what we might call Western man could be attempted without devoting many pages to Jefferson. In America we cannot look back at our beginnings without seeing Jefferson looming there. Nor can we look to our future without seeing him looming ahead. Washington was the father of his country, and Jefferson I think, was the spirit.

I am going to make no pretense whatever to original research in putting together this volume. A vast quantity of books on

every aspect of Jefferson's life is to be found in every public library in the nation. I have used them in abundance to gather my facts and can refer here to only a few which I found especially helpful. Most of the authors—since we love statistics these days, I will say eighty percent of the authors—deal with Jefferson as politician, as scientist, as writer, as philosopher and so on. He was all of these and much more. Few, very few, deal with Jefferson as head of a family—Jefferson who as a man had the one aim of all sane men: a good home for his wife and for his children; a good life for all dependent upon him.

I have aimed at telling the full story of Jefferson, depicting him as father and as farmer, as worried provider for a huge household, and worried President in a hostile world. I have aimed at giving an insight into his family problems and his policy problems: the nerve-racking hassling with Hamilton, for instance, side by side with the delicate task of picking the right hat for his daughter.

There are probably some errors in this book, though I have tried to weed them out. There may be, for the historian, errors of emphasis. Why so much about the crops at Monticello and so little about the War of 1812? My answer is that it is impossible to include everything in a proportion to suit everybody. Each author writes his own book—the subject as seen by him. And this, with great diffidence, is the subject as seen by me. It is a portrait in a certain light, striving toward reality.

To understand Jefferson it is necessary first to understand his times, particularly the period immediately preceding the War of Independence. Here I relied heavily in my reading on *Origins of the American Revolution* by John C. Miller. Marie Gould Kimball's *Jefferson—The Road to Glory* is a carefully researched volume on Jefferson's youth—probably the best source available on Jefferson's school years. Jefferson's *Autobiography* throws rewarding glints of light on his personality and some of the behind-the-scenes events in early United States history. But Jefferson put the work aside incomplete. Lives of Jefferson which I referred to are *Thomas Jefferson* by William Eleroy Curtis and *Life and Writings of Thomas Jefferson* by Samuel Eagle Forman. Washington Irving's neglected *Life and Times of Washington* makes interesting reading but is thought a little biased by some. Invaluable for illuminating Jefferson's home life

is *The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson* by Sarah N. Randolph, his great-granddaughter. The edition I used was published in 1871 by Harper and Brothers and I was able to borrow it from the University of Southern California Library, whose staff very kindly helped me in every way they could.

Other lives of Jefferson which I read and found interesting and useful are *Thomas Jefferson* by Stuart Gerry Brown, *Jefferson* by Saul K. Padover, *Jefferson in Power* by Claude G. Bowers, *Thomas Jefferson* by Nathan Schachner and *Jefferson and the Rights of Man* by Dumas Malone.

I also read a great deal about those whose lives touched Jefferson's significantly and recommend *The Life of Aaron Burr* by J. Parton (the edition I read was that of 1858, again on loan from the University of Southern California Library), *Aaron Burr* by Nathan Schachner, *Jefferson and Hamilton* by Claude G. Bowers, *Jefferson and Madison* by Adrienne Koch, and *John Marshall* by Allan B. Magruder. This list is indicative of my reading, and not comprehensive. It is included as a guide to those who may want to read further into the lives of these men.

Anything else? Yes, one thing which is not a book you can get out of a library—America itself. I have lived here now for twenty-five years, the greater part of my adult life. I do not think that, however much I had read about Jefferson, I could have written this book about him without having lived in America. It is something that is in the air, and if you press me to say what that something is, I have to answer: Jefferson.

LEONARD WIBBERLEY

Hermosa Beach, 1968

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YOUNG MAN FROM THE PIEDMONT 1743–1776

I

MR. PETER JEFFERSON was seated in a winged chair in the withdrawing room or parlor of his house, which was called Shadwell and lay east of the Rivanna River in the colony of Virginia. He was a big man and an active one, but a time had arrived in his life when no activity on his part was of any avail. Now and again he would glance at a large clock which stood between two pieces of Venetian glassware on the mantelpiece over the fireplace. The clock had a loud strong tick which at other times was comforting. Now he found it irritating, and indeed foreboding. It was as if the clock might be ticking away someone's life, and he twice got up to stop the pendulum, and twice resisted this impulse.

From the bedroom at the back of the house he could hear now and again a suppressed groan. At the sound he would half rise from his chair with a look of desperation on his face.

The year was 1743 and at the half-open door of the room was a slave. His face was troubled and he kept his eyes on his master. Now and again he would mutter something as if he were talking to a third person, though there were only the two present. This was his way of talking to his master when he was in distress; without disrespect. He spoke to this third person and his master could overhear what was said and might be comforted.

"Seen two gray squirrels sitting on a pine branch," the Negro said. "Lawdy, they was fat." He chuckled at the fatness of the squirrels. "John said for to go and get a gun and shoot them two squirrels for dinner, but I done said, 'No sir. Not nothing a-going to be killed on Master's land this day when his son gonna be born. Not nothing going to be killed. Not even a little fly. For this is a birthing day.' And them two squirrels they looked at me like

they knowed all along they was safe and then went on chattering to each other."

Peter Jefferson made no sign that he had heard all this, and the slave, still studying his master, thought of something else that might be comforting.

"Down in them rich tidewater places they does say that all babies is born when the tide turns the river back—that is, all man babies. That's because boys is strong like the sea is stronger than the river. But up here, that's all of no account. Ain't no tide ever reaches up here."

Peter Jefferson turned and looked at the slave and said with a wry smile, "It's been four and a half hours. Jane was seven hours and Mary six and a half. . . ."

He was interrupted by a sharp cry from the bedroom. He got swiftly out of the chair and strode down the corridor to the door of the bedroom. Outside was a crowd of women house slaves who made room for him, so that when he reached the door, he stood alone before it, the Negroes watching him from the lower end of the corridor. He stood irresolute for a moment, and then hearing nothing but labored breathing from the bedroom was about to put his hand on the latch when the door opened and the doctor stood before him, wiping his hands on a towel.

"A boy, Mr. Jefferson," he said briskly. "A boy. Weighs nine pounds, I'll warrant, and wonderfully strong. . . ."

"My wife . . .?" asked Peter Jefferson, looking over the doctor to the big bed on which she lay.

"All well," said the doctor. "A fine woman and a brave one. The pulse is good. You may see her for a minute, but she needs rest."

Peter Jefferson went over to the bed and stood towering over it for a minute. Then he knelt by the bedside and took his wife's hand in his. Her eyes were closed and she was very drowsy but she opened them for a moment and looked at her husband and said, "A boy . . . a son. . . ."

"Yes," he said. "Yes." That was all he could say, for his heart was too full with gratitude that his wife had survived the ordeal and had given birth to a son. He wanted to do something to help his wife, and noting that there was a little film of perspiration on her forehead, he took his handkerchief and gently patted her

brow. Then, seeing that she seemed asleep, he got up, the wooden floor of the bedroom creaking under his huge weight, and said in a whisper to the doctor who stood behind him, "Where's the boy?"

The doctor gestured to a screened-off area of the bedroom. "The women are attending to him," he said. "They'll bring him in a minute."

It was a little while before a middle-aged Negro woman came from behind the screen, carrying a bundled-up morsel of humanity.

"Gonna be big like the master," the woman said. "My goodness, but he's a long baby. And got a parcel of red hair. Never did see such red hair on a little ol' baby before." She laughed with delight at the thought of the red-haired baby, and Peter Jefferson took his son from her and pushed the blanket away from the little face.

"He looks worried," he said.

"They all looks worried," said the woman. "It's a worrisome business coming into the world all little and new."

Peter Jefferson walked out of the bedroom into the corridor where the rest of the household servants together with most of the field hands were gathered. They crowded around to see the baby, and Peter Jefferson turned to one of them. "Saddle a horse and ride to Tuckahoe and tell Mr. Randolph that I have a son," he said. "I'll give you a note to take to him. Be as quick as you can, for he will be anxious."

William Randolph, a member of one of the richest of the Virginia families, was Peter Jefferson's closest friend. They had made many trips into the wilderness together, hunting and surveying, and they had applied for and been granted several thousand acres of land up in the wilds along the Rivanna River, a tributary of the James. He should be the first to know of the birth of his friend's son.

William Randolph had a big plantation house at Tuckahoe, on the James River in Henrico County. But Peter Jefferson did not come of a wealthy family like the Randolphs and had to establish his own fortune, though he had inherited a large tract of land from his father. He had decided to build his family home, as a pioneer, on the virgin lands along the Rivanna, but when he came

to look over the area for a suitable site, he found that the best site was on land owned by his friend Randolph, on the eastern bank of the river.

"What would you take for two hundred acres of your land?" Peter asked his friend over a bowl of punch at the Randolph plantation at Tuckahoe.

"You like this punch?" asked William Randolph.

"Yes," said Peter, surprised, for punch didn't seem to have much to do with the matter.

"Well," said William with a twinkle in his eye, "it is a good arrack punch and I like it. It will cool you when you are hot, warm you when you are cold, and raise your spirits when you're depressed."

"Not a doubt about it," agreed Peter Jefferson, still mystified.

"Good. Then for the two hundred acres of my land, you must pay me the biggest bowl of arrack punch that is to be had from the Raleigh Tavern at Williamsburg," said Randolph. And that was the bargain agreed upon. Peter Jefferson got his two hundred acres of land for the bowl of punch, and bought another two hundred acres for fifty pounds. He married William Randolph's cousin Jane, and on the land acquired established his family home which he named Shadwell, after the parish in London, England, where Jane had been born. And now he had a son to carry on the Jefferson name. Life was good indeed.

When Peter Jefferson built his house, Shadwell, on the Rivanna River, six years before the birth of his eldest son whom he called Thomas, there were only two or three other settlers in the area. Virgin forest covered the land, with only a few trails through the forest and those uncertain. People traveled on foot or on horseback and often had to dismount and hack their way through thickets. The area was known as the Piedmont country, meaning, "the country at the foot of the mountains." Westward the land rose in a series of mountain chains dominated by the Blue Ridge Mountains. They were forest-clad mountains thickly covered with magnificent growths of oak, chestnut, beach, elm and pine. The true frontier with its stockades and blockhouses lay only a hundred miles west of Shadwell.

But Peter Jefferson's house was not the little log cabin of the Kentucky pioneers. Using slave labor, he laid out good founda-

tions of stone, enclosing cellars for storing food, and on these foundations built a large wooden house of four huge rooms. It was a story and a half high, the area enclosed by the roof being made into quarters for the household servants and bedrooms for the children.

Down the river, where the Rivanna and the Fluvanna joined to form the James, lay what was called the Tidewater country. Here was a coastal plain of rich alluvial land, stretching a hundred miles to the sea. William Randolph's plantation, Tuckahoe, lay in the Tidewater country, so called because, twice in every twenty hours, the incoming tide from the Chesapeake Bay reversed the flow of the James River, raising its level until it lapped and sometimes overflowed the rim of its banks.

This sea tide was of the greatest benefit to the tobacco planters of the Tidewater area. It allowed ships to come up the river and tie up to wharves at the foot of their plantations. Onto the ships slaves loaded big hogsheads of tobacco weighing a thousand pounds apiece for shipment to England. Tobacco was the golden crop of Virginia—the source of wealth of the country. It was so valuable that it was used instead of money for paying debts and it was more certain of retaining its value than money.

There was a shortage of English currency in Virginia, and through most of the southern colonies attempts to establish a colonial currency failed, for people did not trust the colonial money. But they trusted tobacco. That could always be relied upon to fetch a good price in England, where it was exchanged for goods or entered as credit on the books of London and Bristol merchants.

The great families of Virginia lived in luxury on the Tidewater, made rich by their golden tobacco crops worked by their slaves.

Life was harder in the Piedmont where Thomas Jefferson was born. Land had still to be cleared before it could be planted with tobacco and corn. Travel was difficult. Men had still to work with their hands, master and slave at times laboring together. In some areas the climate or soil was unsuited to tobacco and less profitable crops were raised. What tobacco was cultivated had to be rolled in stout hogsheads along trails to the Tidewater for shipment, or a half-dozen hogsheads might be put on board two

canoes lashed together and taken down the shallow Rivanna to the deeper waters of the James.

The Tidewater planters were the ruling class. They were fully represented in the House of Burgesses where, all being to their satisfaction, they resisted change. The planters of the Piedmont had not so much say in the House of Burgesses, and wanted more.

Peter Jefferson, living in the Piedmont and related to the wealthy Randolphs of the Tidewater, was acquainted with the highest and the lowest classes of people in Virginia. He had had little schooling, being taught to read and write by his father, but he had a passion for knowledge, and spent many an evening learning mathematics so that his services were in demand as a surveyor.

He added to his profits from his pioneer plantation by undertaking surveys for the royal governor. He loved the wilderness, and with Joshua Fry, professor of mathematics at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, he surveyed the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina. One of the first maps of Virginia was made by Peter Jefferson and Joshua Fry. He not only knew the Scots and Irish frontiersmen of the wilderness, but also the Indians who hunted and lived in the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountains. These were his friends, and whenever a party of them were on their way to Williamsburg, to petition the governor for some favor, they always stopped at his house, camping on the grounds of his plantation. They made a trail out of the mountains past Shadwell, and it was not unusual for a hundred Cherokees to pitch their tents on the rough pasturage around Peter Jefferson's big house.

On this plantation there was a little mountain, almost denuded of trees, and from its peak it was possible, looking westward, to see the line of the forested Blue Ridge Mountains forming a barrier against the sky. When Tom Jefferson was old enough his father often took him to the top of this little mountain to see the view. Wave after wave of mountain range rose blue in the evening sky as far as the eye could see. Sometimes hosts of carrier pigeons fluttered in dark ragged streamers across the tops of the forests. In the still of the evening the boy could hear the gobbling of wild turkeys in the underbrush, the eerie, snarling cry of a

hunting bobcat, or the crashing of a startled deer through the thicket. Tom Jefferson as a boy never tired of the sights and sounds to be enjoyed from the top of this little mountain.

"What lies beyond the mountains?" he asked his father.

"More mountains."

"And beyond them?"

"A big river—the Mississippi."

"And beyond the river?"

Peter Jefferson shrugged. "Nobody knows for sure, except maybe the Spanish. Some say a desert and some say grassland. The Indians say both."

"Who owns the land there?"

"The Spanish claim to own it."

"Well, beyond the Spanish land, what else is there?"

"I don't know, son," said Peter Jefferson. "But thousands of miles away there is another ocean—the Pacific. And beyond that is China."

"But nobody really knows what lies beyond the Mississippi?"

"No. It's not mapped. There are stories of people who went into that land. But we haven't any records."

The boy looked at the blue mountains and thought of the big river miles and miles beyond them, and beyond the river hundreds of miles of land that nobody knew anything about. It was something to dream about; and climbing to the top of the little mountain that he was later to call Monticello, he dreamed about it often.

2

WHEN Thomas Jefferson was two years old, his father's best friend, William Randolph, died. His death was completely unexpected. He was only thirty-three years old and the blow lay heavily on his family, for his wife had died only a short while before. His three daughters, Judith, Mary and Priscilla, and his four-year-old son, Thomas Mann Randolph, were left orphans.

A messenger on a sweat-soaked horse brought the news to Peter Jefferson, seventy miles away at Shadwell. Peter Jefferson didn't hesitate over what to do. He had promised his friend that if he died he would take care of his children and his plantation. He appointed an overseer for his own estates, got together his baggage and a few slaves, and set out with his family for Tuckahoe. By now Peter Jefferson had another child, a daughter, Elizabeth, who was only six months old. The family traveled by horseback through the wilderness. No coach or carriage could get through the narrow trails over the mountains. Two-year-old Thomas Jefferson was placed on a pillow on the saddle croup of one of the slaves. Peter Jefferson carried his infant daughter Elizabeth in his arms. The journey took three days, and at night they camped out in the forest where the father, who was used to the outdoor life, put up tents with the help of the slaves.

The elder girls thought it was great fun. They helped to look after the baby, and Jane was given the job of seeing that little Tom didn't toddle off into the woods and get lost. She loved him dearly because he was the only boy in the family; she changed his clothes, washed and fed him, and slept beside him during the night. The slaves teased her and called her "little mother."

Tuckahoe, the Randolph plantation house, was a mansion compared with Shadwell. It was built in the form of an H, being actually two two-story houses connected by a large hallway or salon, which was so big that it readily held four sofas and several chairs, and was lighted by an enormous chandelier suspended from the high ceiling. This salon served for entertainments—for lavish dinners or balls, for during his lifetime William Randolph had been fond of company and delighted in giving big dinners and dances to which he invited guests from forty or fifty miles around. The guests were not expected to return to their homes after the dinner or the dance. They were accommodated in one of the two houses making up the Tuckahoe mansion, and often stayed as long as a week, riding, hunting and fishing, with dancing each evening before returning to their homes.

Mrs. Peter Jefferson knew the house well, for she had often been there during her childhood. It was no great problem for her, with plenty of servants, to take care of the mixed family of eight children—half of them Randolphs and half her own. Peter Jeffer-

son was the one with the problem, for he now had two estates to manage—Tuckahoe and his own plantation seventy miles up the river.

But he was a man of great energy and a methodical man as well. Nothing was done on either of the estates without his direction and knowledge. He kept separate account books for the two of them, scrupulously noting the purchase of a mare or the payment of a blacksmith. He personally superintended the loading of the hogsheads of tobacco on the ships docked on the James River at the foot of the huge lawn before the plantation house. Once, so it is said, seeing some men struggling to stand one of the heavy hogsheads on end, he told them to move aside and got between two of the great barrels. He bent down and put his big hands on the rims of the barrels and upended the two of them at the same time—handling with the enormous strength of his back and shoulders something like a ton of weight.

Soon Peter Jefferson had matters so well organized that he was able to go off surveying again. His children grew accustomed to not seeing their father for weeks and sometimes months, between his surveying and his visits to the Shadwell estate. But they lived happily in the splendid Tuckahoe mansion, and when he was home Peter Jefferson would give dinner parties and dances. He hired a tutor to teach the girls to dance and he danced with them, the huge man carefully performing the figures of a minuet with solemn little girls of nine and ten. He saw to it that the boys, when they were old enough, learned to dance too, for he believed a gentleman should be as apt on the dance floor as on the back of a horse.

There was, on the Tuckahoe estate, a little one-room schoolhouse, built of boards. Here, the children were sent every day to "English school" under a private tutor. Jane led her little brother Thomas, when he was five years of age, weeping to the schoolhouse to start his lessons. He struggled with the alphabet and the multiplication tables, recited by the children aloud in a singsong voice. He learned first to print letters and then to write in Spencer's script. And when he had learned to write his own name, he wrote it proudly, while Jane watched, on the wall of the school, and it is still there to this day.

His sister Jane helped him all the time. She rehearsed him in

the tricky difference between "m" and "n" and checked over his sums, done painfully on a slate. She went fishing with him but let Tom put the worms on the hook, and when, playing by the river, he got his shoes wet, she conspired with the kitchen slaves to dry them by the fire so he wouldn't get into trouble.

Thomas Jefferson had four years of schooling at Tuckahoe, and then the family returned to their own home at Shadwell, arrangements being made for the care of the Randolph children. Peter Jefferson wondered whether the pampered life at Tuckahoe and the company of so many girls had not softened his young son Thomas. The boy was nine years of age, tall, slender, but with good bones and strong.

"When I was your age," Peter told him, "I was a pretty good shot. I used to borrow my father's gun and go out and shoot some game in the woods for dinner."

Tom considered this for a moment. "May I borrow your gun, sir?" he asked, blushing a little.

"Certainly," said his father. "You'll find powder horn and shot right by it." He grinned. "Do you think you'll get a turkey?"

"I won't come home without one," said Tom Jefferson.

The next morning he was up early and off into the woods. He spent the whole day there but he hadn't the knack of a woodland hunter. He was too clumsy in moving about and not quick enough with his gun, and though he saw several turkeys and shot at them, they fluttered off unhurt, mocking him with their gobbling. Late in the afternoon Tom started back empty-handed, ashamed and at the same time angry with himself that he had missed with every ball he fired. When he was about half a mile from Shadwell, he heard a turkey clucking in the underbrush nearby. He crept forward cautiously toward the sound, peeked over the top of some low-growing dogwood, and saw the turkey. It was a wild turkey, all right, but it was in a wooden pen. Someone had caught it as a chick and decided to raise it to provide a meal later on.

Tom thought the situation over for a moment. He had said he wouldn't come back without a turkey and here was one right before him. On the other hand, he couldn't shoot it there in the pen. But again, if he let it out of the pen, it would certainly fly off before he could get a shot at it.

He undid one of his garters, grabbed the turkey and tied it by a leg to a sapling. Then he backed off what he thought was a fair distance, took aim and fired. The turkey fell dead on the ground and Tom picked it up and carried it back to Shadwell.

"Did you shoot it yourself?" Peter Jefferson asked.

"Yes, sir," said Tom.

"Hm'm," said his father. "Well it seems as though you are a better woodsman than I took you for. We shall have it for dinner tomorrow."

Tom never told his father the true story of that turkey. But he told Jane, for he had no secrets from her. "It wasn't quite honest," he said, "but all I said was that I'd bring back a turkey."

"I think it's very clever," said Jane. "Will you teach me to shoot sometime?"

"Sure," said Tom. "It's very easy, really. The only thing is, don't close your eyes when you pull the trigger."

"It would be so nice to be a boy," said Jane wistfully.

They were as inseparable at Shadwell as they were at Tuckahoe. They went together to the Indian camps when the Cherokee came by down the river on their way to Williamsburg, and the Indians taught them how to handle a canoe. Peter Jefferson made a canoe for Tom and he and Jane made trips up and down the river in it, pretending to be explorers of the mysterious Mississippi.

"Nobody really knows where it comes from," said Tom. "There are other big rivers flowing into it and nobody has ever been up them to find out what kind of land is there. But someday I'm going to find out."

"Will you take me with you?" asked Jane.

"You'll be married by then," said Tom.

"I suppose so," said Jane a little sadly. Then she brightened, "If I'm not married, will you take me with you?"

"Certainly."

"Tom, let's never be separated. Let's be together all the time."

Tom considered this gravely. "We'll have to be separated sometime," he said. "That's the way it is when you grow up. You'll live in one place and I'll live in another. But I won't ever forget you, Jane."

"And I won't forget you," said Jane. "Never. And if you're sick you're to send for me."

They were separated earlier than they expected. There was no school at Shadwell or near Shadwell, and Peter Jefferson was not satisfied with the amount of education Tom had. He read well and liked reading, even borrowing volumes of *The Spectator* from his father's library to read the essays of Steele and Addison. He read books like *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, by a man called Lemuel Gulliver who, his father said, was really Jonathan Swift, a brilliant clergyman of Dublin, Ireland.

But Tom Jefferson had no knowledge of Latin or Greek and so all the classics were closed to him except in translation. And furthermore his mathematics was limited to arithmetic, without even a touch of algebra or geometry. Peter Jefferson, casting around for a school for his son, was delighted to learn that the Reverend William Douglas, recently arrived from Scotland, had undertaken to open a school to teach classics and mathematics to young ladies and gentlemen. His school would be at Dover Creek, near Tuckahoe, and Peter Jefferson arranged to pay the Reverend Mr. Douglas nineteen pounds sterling a year to educate his son. That was the end of the brief happy days with Jane at Shadwell. Thomas Jefferson went to Dover Creek to be tutored by Mr. Douglas for the next five years.

Mr. Douglas was not the Latin scholar that Peter Jefferson took him for. He did teach young Tom the rudiments of Latin and Greek, leading him through the simpler declensions and conjugations, but Virgil and Cato and Homer strained his powers. Thomas Jefferson spent hours translating into Latin and Greek sentences like "The girls crown the queen with roses," and then "The girls *will* crown the queen with roses," and then "The girls *have crowned* the queen with roses." But he got hardly a peek at Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*.

He did, however, learn French, for Mr. Douglas was proficient in that language and fond of tracing French words to their Latin roots. He might misspell a few Latin endings here and there but his French was correct, and at the end of five years' study, fourteen-year-old Thomas Jefferson was fluent in French and not entirely at a loss with Latin and Greek.

He had furthermore developed a keen interest in languages, so

that he soon undertook the study of Italian on his own—aided by Mr. Douglas' tussles with Latin. Then he ventured into German, but never mastered this language, for Anglo-Saxon, the language from which English developed, claimed his attention.

Five years, then, Thomas Jefferson spent at the Douglas school, boarded by the clergyman who was so careful with his money that he served the same meat pie day after day until it was moldy. Tom worked hard and went to Shadwell during holidays or visited the Randolphs at nearby Tuckahoe.

Then came a big change. In late June of 1757, Peter Jefferson, who was then only forty-nine years of age, fell ill. He was ill enough to have to go to bed, and Thomas Walker, his friend and doctor, visited him. Dr. Walker called three times to see Peter Jefferson in July but his patient did not improve. In August, the doctor made almost daily calls. On the 17th of August, Peter Jefferson died.

At the age of fourteen Tom Jefferson became the head of his family. There were now seven other children, the youngest a boy of two named Randolph.

His boyhood had ended. He must succeed his father and become a man.

3

STANDING in the large living room of Shadwell, the attorney adjusted his small wire-rimmed glasses and, with a sympathetic nod toward Mrs. Peter Jefferson, recently widowed, started to read the will of Peter Jefferson. To fourteen-year-old Thomas Jefferson, seated on a sofa close to his sister Jane, the whole procedure seemed utterly unreal. His father's life was being laid out before him in a statement of the possessions he had acquired, the possessions listed by the lawyer in a dry voice devoid of any emotion, and punctuated by an occasional little cough. When the lawyer uttered this little cough, he was careful first of all to produce a linen handkerchief which he put before his thin

mouth, as if all coughs without the benefit of this handkerchief were illegal and should be stricken from the record.

Tom had no idea that his father had amassed so much wealth in his short life. He was accustomed to the splendor of the Tuckahoe mansion, the richness and vastness of the grounds around, the magnificent lace tablecloths, the plenitude of Queen Anne silverware and the abundance of slaves. Shadwell did not compare with Tuckahoe. Yet it seemed as the will proceeded that his father must have amassed wealth at least equal to that possessed by the Randolphs. Some of the wealth Peter Jefferson had inherited from his own father, in particular an estate at Snowdon lower down the river. But most of it Peter Jefferson had created himself with his enormous energy. The will then was for Tom a kind of summary of his father's life, and made the grief of his loss heavier to bear. He had not known his father had worked so hard and to such purpose.

There were nearly three thousand acres of the estate at Shadwell. These were willed to Mrs. Jefferson for the rest of her life, together with one-sixth of the slaves and all the household articles. There were other parcels of lands on the Rivanna, Fluvanna and Hardware rivers which were divided between Tom and his infant brother Randolph. A number of the slaves were to be divided among the six daughters (together with their natural increase) and each of the daughters was to get two hundred pounds as a marriage portion or payable to them when they reached the age of twenty-one if they did not marry. There was a special clause directed to Tom, and when the attorney came to it, he removed his glasses and gave his little cough, producing the handkerchief as license, and looked over at the fourteen-year-old boy for a few moments until all in the room turned to look at him also. The attorney then replaced his glasses and continued with his reading:

"I give and bequeath to my son Thomas my mulatto fellow Tawney, my books, mathematical instruments and my cherry tree desk and bookcase. . . . I give and bequeath all my slaves not herein otherwise disposed of, to be equally divided between my two sons, Thomas and Randolph. . . ." For a moment it seemed to Thomas Jefferson that his father was alive and had spoken directly to him. The gift of his cherry tree desk and his

books and bookcase and mathematical instruments—that brought his father back to life. How often he had seen his father working at that desk in the evening. Many mornings he had gone into his father's study and seen on the desk two candles burned almost to stubs—evidence of how late his father had worked. The desk was his now, to work at as his father had done.

Under the will four guardians were appointed to administer the estate until Thomas came of age. They were Peter Randolph, a cousin of his mother's; Thomas Turpin, Thomas' uncle; Dr. Thomas Walker; and John Harvie—all old friends and business associates of Peter Jefferson. When the reading of the will was finished, refreshments were served, and while the attorney was discreetly congratulating Mrs. Jefferson on the excellent manner in which her husband had managed his affairs "against that event which none may avoid," Thomas Jefferson slipped outside the house to get a breath of air. Before the house was a lawn divided by a driveway, and standing on the driveway were several Negroes holding the horses of the lawyer and the four guardians who had also attended the reading of the will.

"Master Tom," said one of them, "begging your pardon, but who do I belong to now?"

"To the mistress," said Tom, surprised at the question.

The man gave a sigh of relief. Then he looked troubled again. "And Sarah Josephine, my wife . . . and the three children?"

"Why, to the mistress too," said Tom.

The man grinned and the other slaves looked a little happier. "Ain't none of us going to be sold, is there, Master Tom?" one of them asked. "Master Peter left enough money so none of us has to be sold?"

"Of course he did," said Tom. "None of you will be sold. You'll stay here and be looked after as always."

Tom looked the men over. For the first time in his life, the appalling situation of the slave, a human being who was a piece of property, came forcefully to him. He knew every one of them. They were humans like himself. But they had no rights—they were like houses or furniture or parcels of land, to be disposed of as their owner thought fit. Was it right to buy or sell another human being? There seemed suddenly something wrong with that. Everybody did it. Everybody he knew owned slaves. Even

he himself owned slaves now. The mulatto Tawney had been given to him specifically by his father, as his father had given him his cherrywood desk and his mathematical instruments.

If it were wrong to own slaves, shouldn't he set Tawney free? But supposing he did free Tawney, what would the ex-slave do for a living? Nobody would employ him. Nobody would pay him wages when they could get all the work they wanted done by their slaves for nothing. If he freed all the slaves that came to him, then he would have to pay for labor on his plantation. That would put the cost of his produce up so high compared with plantations worked by slaves that he would soon be bankrupt.

The question was a difficult one and he put it aside to think about it later. But it was constantly in his mind in the months ahead. Something had to be done about slavery—but what? He did not know the answer.

Just before his father's death, Tom had left the Reverend William Douglas' school to study under another Scotsman, the Reverend James Maury. The Reverend Maury lived fourteen miles from Shadwell at the foot of Peter's Mountain. He was a much more learned man than the Reverend Douglas—a master of the classics and something more besides, for he was an amateur geologist and naturalist. He taught Latin, Greek, French, philosophy and history, and he mixed in with these field trips to look for fossils, or collect plants, or identify and count the birds and animals in the forests around. He once showed young Tom a piece of fossilized clay he had found on Peter's Mountain with the imprint of a shell in it, and theorized that at one time the mountain had been at the bottom of an enormous sea. The Reverend Maury was a liberal in his thought—adhering blindly to no dogma—demanding that each problem be examined and decided on its merits.

"Man was given reason to reason with," he told Tom. "Do not submit your reason to other men's prejudices. Examine everything for yourself, putting emotions aside. Then you are most likely to come to the correct conclusion."

They talked about theories of government—whether people were capable of governing themselves or whether it was necessary to have over them others of superior education who could handle affairs for them. Tom early inclined to the view that all men should have a say in how they were governed. The Rev-

rend Maury posed the question of property. "If a man owns ten housand pounds in property, hasn't he a right to a larger say in government than a man who owns only the clothes on his back? Wouldn't the one be inclined to be more responsible and the other less responsible?"

Tom hadn't a ready answer for that. His reason told him that someone with a big stake in a country, a city or a nation was likely to be more prudent in handling its affairs than someone who had no such stake. But men were surely equal in that they had equal rights. One of those rights must be an equal influence in government affairs. Like slavery, this was a question to be examined deeply and over a long period.

Life at Mr. Maury's school wasn't all geology, philosophy and classical studies. Tom Jefferson now owned his own horses and loved riding. He became one of the boldest riders in the neighborhood, saddling horses that others feared, riding the twelve miles from Peter's Mountain to Shadwell as often as he could to see his family and especially Jane.

After the fiasco of his first turkey hunt, he learned to shoot well, hunting deer and squirrels. There were three kinds of squirrels in the region—red, gray and black. He took to weighing those he shot, keeping records of the weights and speculating on why there was a distinct weight difference between the different species. He made daily records of the temperature, noted the migrations of birds, kept records of wildflowers, specifying the kinds to be found and in what places and when they bloomed and so on. Everything he saw interested him, and when his sister Jane started taking music lessons, he took them too. Music entranced him. He decided to learn to play the violin, and practiced carefully every day for two or three hours. He found he had his father's energy, for he could put in fourteen hours of study a day.

"It is surprising how much you can do if you are always busy," he said once to his friend Dabney Carr, a fellow student under the Reverend Maury and the same age as himself. The two of them made a habit of studying together under a huge oak tree near Shadwell during vacations or on weekends. They loved that oak tree which, filtering the sunlight, created a lovely constantly moving pattern of light and shadow on the ground.

"I'd like to be buried under this tree when I die," Tom said one

day. He laughed. "It's a silly thing to say because when you are dead it doesn't really matter where you are buried. You can't know anything about it."

"I'd like to be buried under it too," said Dabney. "Listen, whoever of us dies first, let's promise that the other will bury him under this tree." They made the promise with all the intensity of young friends.

Under the same tree they discussed what they would do when they grew up.

"I'm going to study law," said Dabney Carr.

"At William and Mary?" Tom asked.

"Where else? Dr. Maury can't teach us law."

"Us?"

"Well, you'll study with me too, won't you?"

"I don't know whether I could get my guardians to consent to my going to William and Mary," said Tom.

"You can try," said Dabney. "You can't spend all your time studying with Dr. Maury."

That Christmas Tom spent two weeks as a guest of Colonel Dandridge, who had been a friend of his father's and kept a lavish house on his plantation in Hanover County on the South Anna River west of Shadwell. There were parties every night, for Colonel Dandridge kept open house for his neighbors during the holiday season. There were singing and dancing and amateur theatricals, and whoever could play a musical instrument was expected to do so for his fellow guests.

The merriest musician of them all was a tall, dark-haired, long-nosed, long-jawed young man named Patrick Henry. His coat, being a little old, fitted him tightly across the shoulders, and his linen was not well pressed. He looked a bit of a ruffian among the other elegant guests and he had a peculiar accent, saying "nach-eral" for "natural" and "consarn" for "concern." He spent the days riding and hunting, always out with the men, and the evenings cracking jokes which were always funny but not always polite. He could play any kind of jig or reel on the fiddle and played for hours, refreshing himself with wine which he did not sip for the flavor but gulped down with great relish.

Tom was fascinated by Patrick Henry. The ladies clustered around him and the gentlemen too. He had a quip on every

subject and gave an imitation of the London fashion in taking snuff that had everybody in stitches.

"Closed down my store," said Henry, "or it closed me down. I'll tell you how it was—there was a quarrel between me and bookkeeping and bookkeeping won. I'd want a pound to bet on a race and the books would say I couldn't have one. Well, they were my books so I took the pound anyway and be hanged to them. But they won in the end for there came a day when there wasn't a pound to be had.

"Then there was a thing called 'Accounts Receivable.' Never have anything to do with them. That's never-never money. It's money that you may receive if the feller that owes it to you comes into more money than he expects—and doesn't spend it before he gets around to paying you."

"What are you going to do now, Mr. Henry?" asked Tom.

"I'm going to read for the law, Mr. Jefferson," said Henry. "I'll be a lawyer. And when I'm a lawyer I'll never keep any books. Payment in advance or they can go without my sarvices. That's the way it will be with Patrick Henry."

"Will you go to Williamsburg to study?"

"I will," said Henry. And then he laughed. "For as short a time as possible," he added. "The law's just common sense. A man has his nacheral rights and that's all there is to it. Some statute passed during the reign of Henry III of England can't interfere with a man's nacheral rights."

"I may see you there," said Tom.

"You're going to college?"

"Well—" said Tom hesitatingly. "I'll have to ask my guardians."

"To be sure," said Mr. Henry. "To be sure." But he said it in such a way as to indicate that, if it were himself, he would go to college first and ask his guardians afterward. There was a touch of the buccaneer about Patrick Henry—a dashing, laughing audacity, a lively humor and a quick tongue.

After the Christmas at Dandridge's plantation, Tom returned to Shadwell but stopped first at the plantation of Colonel Peter Randolph, one of the Randolph clan who had been appointed one of his guardians.

They talked of Tom's future and his education. "You must mix about in the world, young man," said the Colonel. "Make friends,

discuss affairs, get into a little trouble, maybe, and out of it. How old are you now?"

"Nearly seventeen . . ."

"Hmmm. It's time to be up and doing, my boy; getting ready to play a man's part in the world. You need to meet more people than come your way at Shadwell. Depend upon it—the friends you make in your youth will be of the greatest value for the remainder of your life. For my part, I think you ought to go to William and Mary College but you must secure the permission of your other guardians as well."

The most important of these was John Harvie, who had worked closely in many land deals with Tom's father and who now managed the business affairs of the Jeffersons. He was a man of plain sense, well read, and little ruled by his emotions. Tom knew he would have to advance some good reasons for wanting to go to college if John Harvie's agreement to the project was to be obtained.

Back at Shadwell, Tom composed several drafts of a letter to John Harvie before he felt he had the right version. The letter he sent was as follows:

> *Sir: I was at Colonel Peter Randolph's about a fortnight ago & my schooling falling into Discourse, he said he thought it would be to my advantage to go to college, & was desirous I should go, as indeed I am myself for several reasons. In the first place as long as I stay at the Mountains the Loss of one fourth of my Time is inevitable, by company's coming here & detaining me from school. And likewise my Absence will in a great Measure put a stop to so much Company, & by that Means lessen the expenses of the Estate in house-keeping. And on the Other Hand by going to the College I shall get more universal Acquaintance, which may hereafter be serviceable to me; & I suppose I can pursue my Studies in the Greek & Latin as well there as here, & likewise learn something of the Mathematics. I shall be glad of your opinion. . . .*

He believed that the arguments about not wasting so much time and reducing the expenses of the household would appeal to the businesslike Mr. Harvie. He was right. In a few days came a

reply giving his consent to Tom's attending William and Mary College in Williamsburg. Tom packed his books, said good-by to his mother, to Jane and the rest of his family, saddled a horse and set off.

He had never been to a town in his life—never seen two houses that stood side by side, let alone a whole row of houses; never seen a shop nor attended a play other than amateur family theatricals. This was going to be a big adventure for him.

4

At first meeting, Williamsburg all but swallowed young Tom Jefferson. The town contained only two hundred houses and there were scarcely a thousand people living in it, including slaves. But it was still a far bigger place than Tom had ever seen, and it was as lively as New York or Boston or Philadelphia and perhaps even livelier. For one thing, it was the resort of the planters of Virginia who came to Williamsburg whenever the House of Burgesses was in session. They came officially to attend to public business as delegates to the House. But they were all men of great wealth and blood and devoted to entertainment. And so they had, almost daily, horse racing or cock fighting, or dancing or hunting, or card-playing bouts when hundreds of pounds exchanged hands on the turn of a card at the gambling tables.

So much money was spent in Williamsburg when the House of Burgesses was in session that theatrical companies from London crossed the Atlantic to stage the plays of Congreve and Shakespeare in the little town. A man would buy out the whole accommodation of the theater to invite his friends to a performance. Actors and actresses mixed gaily with the gentlemen of wealth who loved to parade through the streets in coaches drawn by three pairs of matched horses, with two wigged footmen standing on the back step of the coach.

Tom Jefferson, wealthy and of a good family, was welcomed

at any event staged in anyone's house in Williamsburg. He was a good dancer and fond of dancing. He was a good rider and fond of riding. He found credit readily extended to him at the Raleigh Tavern or wherever he might have need of money. The shops of Williamsburg were willing to let him have what goods he wanted merely on his signature. And spending that would have struck him as folly at Shadwell began to appear utterly normal in Williamsburg, for the visiting gentry commonly spent heavily on clothes, horses and entertainment.

In contrast with the excitement of the town, the College of William and Mary was the dullest kind of place. The building itself had a gloomy prison look, and on his first glimpse of it, Tom decided that, except for the roof, it looked like a brick kiln—a mere piling of bricks one upon the other without any attempt at grace or proportion. There were something less than a hundred students at the college. All were of the best families of Virginia and in the care of six masters. But the six masters were divided among four schools—a grammar school for boys under fifteen, a school of philosophy which was the college proper, a school of divinity for postgraduate students, and an Indian school. The latter was an attempt to educate Indians in English, but few Indians attended for long, or benefited much from the instruction.

Tom entered the school of philosophy but soon found the standards of his fellow students so far below his own that he was quickly bored. He heard lectures on matters he had already mastered himself, and between this and the attractions of the town, he didn't do very much work in his first year at William and Mary. What brought him to his senses was first the bills he had run up by the end of the year, and second, the appointment of Dr. William Small of Scotland as head of the school of philosophy.

His bills were very high—or so they seemed to Tom. There were bills for clothing, for he found his country dress outlandish in fashionable Williamsburg, and there were bills for horses. Every Virginia gentleman needed two or three good animals and Tom didn't want to be different. He loved horses anyway. He was so overcome by remorse when he saw how much he had spent in his first year at Williamsburg that he wrote to John

Harvie, his guardian, plainly stating that he had been extravagant and asking that the bills be paid out of his own portion of the estate, for it would not be fair to deduct the money from the general estate which would one day be divided between his sisters and his brother. Harvie looked over the bills and the letter and chuckled. For a young man on his own for the first time, and in as gay a place as Williamsburg, the bills were by no means high. He wrote to Tom saying, "If you have sowed your wild oats in this way, the estate can well afford to pay the bill." The point was—had he finished sowing his wild oats? That was something for Tom to decide himself. Dr. William Small helped him to make the decision.

Dr. Small was one of the most learned men in Virginia. He liked the tall, handsome, red-headed Jefferson boy. When lectures were over and Tom was likely to head for town to see what was stirring, William Small would suggest a walk to stretch their legs and get some fresh air. Tom would hesitate. He had perhaps half promised to meet a fellow student at the Raleigh, or turn up at some wrestling match or horse race. Dr. Small would smile. He had been a student himself and knew these temptations.

"Come, Mr. Jefferson," he would say, "a man of your intelligence should have no difficulty choosing between the company of the Greek philosophers and the outcome of a horse race. There will always be horse races, Mr. Jefferson. They have been going on since the horse was first domesticated, but I do not know that the sum total of all the horse races that have ever been run has added one iota to the advancement of Man."

Such arguments appealed to Tom Jefferson. Dr. Small had a mind like an encyclopedia. He could discuss any question and with authority. Nor was his mind closed to new knowledge. He searched for it as if it were a treasure, and finding Tom Jefferson eager for learning and able to hold up his end in an argument, he had soon introduced him to Francis Fauquier, Governor of Virginia, and one of the most accomplished men ever to hold that position.

It was typical of the eighteenth century that Francis Fauquier owed his position as Governor of Virginia to the fact that he had lost his whole fortune in one night's gambling in London. He was the son of a director of the Bank of England, and on his fathers'

death, heir to enormous wealth. He was an outstanding economist and had written a treatise opposing the piling up of a national debt. He proposed that governments should tax the income of their subjects to meet expenses, instead of borrowing money which had to be repaid at heavy interest. In proposing a tax on income, Francis Fauquier was a good century ahead of his times. He was handsome and polished, extremely interested in music and literature, had exquisite manners—and an abiding love of gambling.

Shortly after George Anson, the famous Admiral, returned from his voyage around the world, he met Francis Fauquier in London and the two were soon engaged in a game of backgammon. The stakes got higher and higher and when the last hand had been played Fauquier had lost to Admiral Anson the whole fortune he had inherited from his father. Too much of the gentleman to complain, Fauquier thanked the Admiral for his night's sport and went to bed. Anson was so struck by Fauquier's manliness in taking the loss of his fortune without complaint that he procured for Fauquier the governorship of Virginia.

This, then, was the man to whom Dr. Small introduced Tom Jefferson—a brilliant man, whose only vice was the gaming table. The talk at the Governor's mansion, however, was rarely of cards. It was of philosophy or economics or taxation, or the war which was coming to its close.

The war was to be known in Europe as the Seven Years' War, and in the American colonies as the French and Indian Wars. All Canada had now fallen to the British following the defeat of the French at the Battle of Abraham Heights. Furthermore, the French had been cleared out of the Ohio Valley, and in September 1760, the year that Tom Jefferson went to college, the French signed a treaty of surrender in Montreal which ended French rule in any part of the North American continent.

The news of the French surrender was celebrated with joy throughout the colonies. For the people of the frontier it meant that there would be no more hostile Indian raids promoted by the French. For the people of the New England states, it meant that their produce, shipped to England, would not be at the mercy of French privateers. To Tom Jefferson it meant that the day was at hand when people would spill over the lovely folds of the Blue

Ridge Mountains, pushing westward toward the Mississippi. The country was bound to grow and the direction in which it would grow was westward.

The country? What did he mean by "the country"? There wasn't a country really. There were thirteen colonies subject to Britain, which was the mother country. And yet Tom Jefferson already felt about those thirteen colonies as if they constituted a country in their own right. They had the same King as Britain. But they each had their own legislative bodies. They also had their courts. Appeal from a decision of the colonial courts went to the higher English courts. And the legislatures of the colonies were called into session or dismissed by the colonial Governor, who was the King's representative. That was perhaps right. But could the House of Parliament in England countermand a law passed by one of the colonial legislatures? And pursuing that question a little further, could the House of Parliament in England pass laws concerning the purely domestic affairs of the colonies? There were many discussions about such subjects at Governor Fauquier's dinner table. Tom Jefferson listened while Dr. Small took one side, Fauquier another, and George Wythe mediated between the two.

George Wythe was reckoned the best Greek and Latin scholar in Virginia. He was a prominent lawyer in Williamsburg—a small, round-headed, quiet-spoken man, very softhearted and yet a stickler for the law. He surprised the whole of Williamsburg by freeing all his slaves and finding employment for them. Some he kept as servants in his big two-story brick house on Prince George Street, paying them in return for their work.

"An eccentric," the old planters said. "Too much study has gone to his head."

Soon anyone who wanted to find Tom Jefferson in the evening looked for him at the Governor's mansion, for he was there almost every night of the week. Once a week he played violin in a string quartet organized by Governor Fauquier. The quartet played the works of Corelli and Vivaldi and Handel. After a musical evening Fauquier would suggest a game of backgammon and send about the town for some gentlemen to play with. But Fauquier, with the loss of his fortune at cards many years before, had unwittingly taught Tom a lesson in gambling. Tom occa-

sionally took a hand for politeness' sake, but never played deep, contenting himself with small stakes. He made a careful note of money lost in gambling, to the last penny, and in later years would never allow a pack of cards to be seen in his home.

But it wasn't always easy for Tom Jefferson to remain in the company of Dr. Small, Fauquier and George Wythe. Sometimes, during his studies, a fellow student would come in, turn over the table and drag Tom out to witness some kind of sport in the town or join with his fellow students in a celebration at the Raleigh Tavern. Patrick Henry called on him often, the gay, laughing, brilliant man who always seemed more of an outdoorsman than a lawyer. He was a lawyer now, though. He had horrified the lawyers of Virginia by reading law for six weeks and then applying for admission to the bar. He hadn't bothered to wade through the huge dull volumes of Coke, the great English jurist, nor undertaken any of the other patient studies. But he passed his examination anyhow. He argued a case before his examiners with such ardent eloquence, with such forceful assertion of "nacheral" rights, that they had no alternative but to admit him to practice.

Henry liked an active life. During the winter, when the courts were not in session, he rounded up all the overseers he could get together from the neighboring plantations and went off into the pine forests of the Fluvanna River, hunting deer. He lived in moccasins, deerskin breeches, and hunting shirt, didn't bother to shave, hunted all day and joked and told stories around the campfires half the night. The overseers loved him. Tom Jefferson was awed by him. A lawyer in six weeks and one of the most sought-after in the colony! Here surely was genius. Patrick Henry made good his vow to keep no books. He got payment in advance for his services, did what little reading on any particular case that was necessary, took it to court and won it as often as not. He would handle four or five cases in one day without trouble, loved a jury trial and could make the opposing counsel look like a fool with one deft phrase or even a gesture.

During these days in gay Williamsburg, Tom had many struggles with his conscience. Sometimes he wondered whether he wasn't a fool to spend so much time on study. He could become a great fox-hunter, or horseman and jockey. The whole colony

would ring with his name if he rode the winning horse in a big race at Williamsburg. Or if he followed the example of Patrick Henry, concentrating on oratory rather than upon argument, he might become a brilliant lawyer without all the book study. Maybe he was wasting his time studying from dawn late into the night. But whenever he was tempted to give up his study and join in the round of pleasures of his fellow students he would ask himself what Dr. Small would do. And then he returned to his books. He learned to discipline himself so well that he could leave a ball at the height of the festivities to get back to his books.

And yet he remained popular. Patrick Henry never failed to call on him when he came to town and shared his rooms with him. People found him serious but not stuffy. He could hold his own in a discussion with men twice and three times his years. Other students were called by nicknames or their first names. But gradually only his intimates called him Tom or Jeff. To others, even those who knew him quite well, he became Mr. Jefferson.

After two years of study, Thomas Jefferson left William and Mary. He had largely wasted the first year in an unsuccessful battle with the attractions of the town. He had made up for it by studying twelve and fourteen hours a day in the second year. Dr. Small returned to England, but before he went he secured for Tom a place in George Wythe's law office. There was then no formal course of law study in any college. A law student associated himself with a practicing lawyer, attended court, read all he could of law and presented himself for examination when it was thought that he was ready.

Tom was nineteen years of age when he left William and Mary College in 1762. The long war between France and England had come to its close not only in the North American continent but in Europe and in India. The American colonies were safe from a French threat, and the nucleus of a British empire in India had come into being.

But the bill was high and had to be paid.

In London, Prime Minister George Grenville, surveying the costs of the war, decided that the American colonies must pay some part of the bill.

In Williamsburg, Thomas Jefferson began his study of law.

And in Williamsburg too, Patrick Henry was retained in a case which concerned clergymen and tobacco.

Out of these strange and diverse elements there sprang in the short years ahead a storm that was to shake the whole world.

5

THE official religion of the American colonies, established by the home government in England, was that of the Church of England. In different colonies there were varying degrees of tolerance for other religions, so that the Presbyterian Church had a good following in Virginia; and Roman Catholics, though a minority, might still worship in Pennsylvania. But the Church of England was the worship sanctioned by the home government, and the salaries of the ministers of that church were paid from public funds. In Virginia the recompense of a minister for his duties had been set at 16,000 pounds of tobacco a year, tobacco being in Virginia a better means of exchange than money.

The clergy liked that kind of payment. Tobacco always sold for a good price, so they were sure of an ample minimum salary. In some years when the crop was short, the price of tobacco went up and then they received, through the sale of their annual 16,000 pounds, even more money. They felt that was right—that the pastor should partake of the prosperity of his flock, and the price of tobacco, in all the history of Virginia, had never fallen so low as to leave parson or planter without a good living.

However, in 1758, "tobacco payment" was beginning to bring difficulties not only among the clergy but among merchants and planters. A man who had incurred a debt to the value of several hundred pounds of tobacco in one year might find the price enormously increased—and his debt also—when he came to pay it off. If, for instance, he had incurred the debt when tobacco was valued at twopence a pound, and was called on to pay it off when the price of tobacco had gone up to fourpence a pound, his indebtedness had automatically doubled.

Creditors, of course, would demand payment of debts in years when tobacco was short, and many debtors were ruined by this practice. To regulate the situation, the Virginia General Assembly ruled in 1758 that, for purposes of paying debts and salaries, tobacco was to be valued at twopence per pound. A direct result of this was that ministers of the Church of England in Virginia were to receive in the future not 16,000 pounds of tobacco a year, but 32,000 pennies—the sum of one hundred and thirty-three pounds, six shillings and eightpence.

The clergymen were furious. Often they got far more than that through the sale of tobacco when the price was high. They scarcely ever got less. They pointed out angrily that the General Assembly, only ten years before, had specifically set their pay at 16,000 pounds of tobacco—not money—a year. And they emphasized that this previous act of the General Assembly, approved by the Governor of Virginia, had been further approved by the King himself in England. Did the General Assembly of Virginia think that it could now set itself above the King, substituting payment in money for payment in tobacco?

The issue cut even deeper than that. The clergymen were not even subject to the authority of the General Assembly in matters affecting their ministry. They were responsible to the Archbishop of Canterbury in England, and the Archbishop himself was appointed by the King and answerable to the King. The General Assembly of Virginia then had no warrant or authority at all to interfere with the payment of the clergy. So the clergymen argued.

Nonetheless, Governor Fauquier approved the General Assembly's action in setting a money payment for the clergy of the Church of England in Virginia, and the whole colony was split over the matter, which was argued with great heat in the mansions of the planters and in the public rooms of the taverns.

The general public was largely opposed to the clergy in the matter, for whatever a man's religion, he still paid taxes to support the Church of England. When the first year's salary was payable, and the clergymen got their salaries in money, some of them decided that they would appeal the matter directly to England. A suit was brought in the English courts and there the clergymen were upheld. The English courts ruled that they were

entitled to payment in tobacco valued at the price of tobacco at the time of payment.

The English court decision did not sit well with the people of Virginia. The issue, they argued, was a domestic matter which concerned them alone. What did courts sitting in London know of the economics of the colony of Virginia? What right had English courts to interfere with laws passed by Virginia's parliament affecting only the people of Virginia? Was every little bylaw passed by the General Assembly to be subject to the approval of an English court? If so, government became impossible, and the Burgesses of Virginia were wasting their time trying to regulate matters in the colony. Whatever their decisions, an English court could set them aside.

The clergymen might have been warned by the temper of the people. But they were in a triumphant mood after the decision of the English court in their favor. Dr. James Maury, Tom Jefferson's old tutor, brought suit in Hanover County Court at Williamsburg for back payment of his salary from the year 1758. He had been paid at the price of twopence per pound for tobacco and tobacco had sold for more than that. He wanted the difference which he argued was due to him. It would be a substantial sum.

The Williamsburg court could not upset the ruling of the King's Privy Council in London—the court to which the clergymen had taken their case. All it could do was assess the damages owing to Dr. Maury and the other clergymen who joined him in the suit.

But the members of the House of Burgesses decided that although the case was lost, they would fight it anyway. If big damages were granted the clergymen, there would be a serious drain on the public treasury. The court award of damages had to be kept to an absolute minimum, and looking around for someone to argue the case for them, they chose Patrick Henry.

He was a dark-horse choice. There were many more eminent lawyers in practice in Williamsburg who could argue long and well on the legal niceties of the matter. Henry knew little law and didn't pretend to know much. Six weeks of law study had been enough for him. The law, in his mind, could never set aside certain natural rights belonging to all men. He knew what those

natural rights were, and he was prepared to argue them before the highest court on earth in the face of all the monumental tomes written by the most eminent lawyers that ever lived.

After Henry was picked to defend the Burgesses, he was often in Tom Jefferson's rooms, and quite as often in the Apollo room of the Raleigh Tavern. He made practically no preparation of his case, which was so important that hundreds flocked into Williamsburg to attend the hearing. People buttonholed Patrick Henry in the streets and asked him what he thought of his chances. "We'll win, by thunder," Henry would say. And then he'd crack some joke or other and send them off chuckling and shaking their heads over this lawyer who looked like a backwoodsman wearing town clothes, and who was to represent the people of Virginia in what amounted to a contest with the Archbishop of Canterbury and, indeed, the King of England.

Tom Jefferson was concerned that Henry made so little preparation of his case. He hinted that there might be something in some of the old and neglected laws of England that would be of help to him. He offered to research the matter for him if that would be of any help. But Henry brushed aside Tom's concern.

"Men are not to be handicapped by laws passed a hundred, two hundred or a thousand years ago," he said. "The dead don't rule the living, crying out from their graves, 'Thou shalt do this' and 'Thou shalt not do that.' Men live in their own times and rule themselves according to their times. Men make laws and change them when need be. But above all the laws they make, there are certain rights that no legislature can ever set aside and that belong to every man the day he is born."

"Such as?" asked Tom.

"The right to be free, for one," said Henry. "The right of every man to speak his mind. And to that I would add the right to say where his tax money is going, and how much he should pay in tax money anyway, and to whom."

"Well," said Tom dubiously, "I know about those rights. But the court must uphold the law. That is the function of a court. . . ."

"You're wrong, Tom," said Henry. "The function of a court is to see that justice is done. Courts are courts of justice, and when I get before that jury I'll argue justice, and the devil with the law

and all the precedents." And so Patrick Henry would not prepare his case in detail and Tom Jefferson was inclined to believe that Henry would lose the case. But he was determined to be present when the case was tried.

The courtroom was packed on the day of the trial, and only because he was reading law with the eminent George Wythe was Tom able to get a seat.

The clergy were there in large numbers, headed by Dr. James Maury. Tom couldn't even get through the press to exchange greetings with his old tutor.

The nature of the case demanded a jury to assess damages, and the jury, in their best clothes, sat to the side of the judicial bench, their wigs newly ironed and powdered, their clothes well pressed, the buckles gleaming on their shoes. In the front benches were the clergy, grave and dignified, clad in decent black and exchanging a few Latin phrases, to the awe of the less educated spectators. Counsel for the clergy was dressed with the decorum of a bishop, and oozed an air of piety and learning rivaling that of the petitioners.

Counsel for the defendants—Patrick Henry—was late. When the court was called to order, and the excited exchange of argument and opinion and greetings silenced under the stern cry of the court officer, Patrick Henry came pushing through the crowd, to take his place at the attorneys' table. He had a bundle of papers in his hands which he plumped carelessly on the table before him, contrasting with the beautifully prepared brief of his opponent, its various sections marked, for easy reference, with ribbons of red and green.

For a moment there was silence when Henry appeared. It was a silence of amazement, for the man was dressed in his ordinary street clothes. He had no fine London suit on his back, or French lace at his throat and wrists. His suit, in fact, looked as his suits always looked, as if it were a size too small. His linen was clean but hurriedly pressed. He wore no wig, and his long dark hair was hastily gathered by a piece of ribbon at the nape of his neck. The ribbon in the opposing counsel's brief was of better quality than the strip of black cloth that Mr. Henry had snatched up in his lodgings to tie his hair with. Jury, clergy and the general run of spectators gaped at him, those in the rear of the court standing

on the benches to get a better view. Then there were a few snickers and a few remarks, and soon the whole courtroom was commenting on his appearance and the miserable little bundle of papers he had brought in representing his brief. The bailiff had to call twice for silence before the audience settled down again. But even the judge, his fine French wig flowing gracefully over his shoulders, had been shaken out of his gravity by the appearance of Henry, and while the bailiff was calling for order he stared openly at the young attorney.

When the court was at last silent, and the clerk had read the title of the case before it, the judge pointed out that there was no question involved of whether or not the clergy were to receive compensation. That had already been ruled upon by the King's court in London. The duty of the present court was to assess the amount of compensation to be paid to Dr. James Maury and those associated with him. Counsel should then limit their arguments to this matter.

Counsel for the clergymen rose and, in a brief statement quoting tobacco prices backed up by many authorities, argued for a liberal payment running into several thousands of pounds. Counsel's analysis of tobacco prices since 1758 was authoritative; he made a convincing argument in regard to the loss the clergymen had suffered from the withholding of money which might have been profitably invested. He presented his case forcefully, efficiently and briefly, and sat down to a murmur of commendation from his clients.

Patrick Henry had not expected so short a presentation. He had prepared a few principles in his mind that he intended to touch upon. But he hoped for time, while opposing counsel was talking, to get them into a proper order and elaborate them. Now, before he was ready, the judge turned to him and asked him if he had any remarks to make in answer.

Henry rose to his feet. He wasn't prepared and he started badly. He stammered and repeated himself and at times was at a loss for words. There were a few murmurs of contempt from the audience. The opposing counsel looked smug and bored, and the bank of clergymen smiled condescendingly at Henry. The effect was to anger Patrick Henry, and his anger quickly replaced his nervousness. Soon his voice was ringing through the courtroom

and all were enthralled by every syllable he uttered. He had been warned by the judge to confine himself to the price of tobacco and the question of damages. He ignored the warning and addressed himself to the rights of men.

He began by tracing the history of the case, recalling that the House of Burgesses, a properly elected body with full authority, had ruled that the clergy were to be paid at twopence for a pound of tobacco. That ruling had affected others besides the clergy. Others had respected the ruling and abided by it. But the clergy had not respected it and had taken their case to the King's Privy Council in London. There the act of the House of Burgesses had been set aside—set aside by the Privy Council of the King; set aside, then, by the King himself. Had the King the right to throw out the laws of the Virginia legislature? Was there this much power invested in one man that he could, with a little circle of advisers, declare which laws anywhere in the colonies were to stand and which laws were to fall? Was this a true monarch, entitled to the loyalty of his subjects? Or was this a tyrant who had forfeited all claims on loyalty by such an outrage against the people's elected representatives?

At this, counsel for the parsons leaped to his feet. "The gentleman has spoken treason!" he cried.

Henry, flushed but undaunted, plunged on, hammering away at the authority of the King, both personal and as expressed through his Privy Council.

He turned then on the clergymen themselves. They were members of a calling whose duty it was to teach the Gospel. One of the prime functions of an established Church was to encourage the cheerful support of those laws which the people had passed for their own prosperity and good government. But the defendant had failed in this essential Christian function. Instead, motivated by private greed, the clergy had thrown aside the ruling others had accepted and thus had given an example of rebellion against the just laws of the House of Burgesses as sanctioned by the Governor of Virginia. More than that. The clergy were supposed in their calling to comfort the sick, give aid and money and food to the poor and uplift the downtrodden. But instead they were stealing the pauper's last coin, and demanding the milk cow of the widow. They were "rapacious harpies" who

would take the last blanket off a sick woman's bed to satisfy their salaries. So he went on, whipping the clergymen with his scorn, flinging the price of tobacco in their faces until, blushing and ashamed, they left the court one by one in confusion. When Patrick Henry had done, there was complete silence in the courtroom. A whole new concept of thinking had been opened for the audience, and they were awed and exhilarated by what they had heard. The authority of established Church and hereditary King had been exposed as a tyranny to which they had submitted without thinking. Now their eyes were opened.

The judge cleared his throat and addressed himself to the jury. "The question before the court," he replied, "is one of damages. The jury has heard the arguments and will now retire and assess what damages are due."

The jury was out for only five minutes.

"You have deliberated the matter of damages?" asked the judge.

"Yes, your Honor," said the foreman.

"And what damages have you agreed upon as proper?"

"One penny," was the reply.

Suddenly all was in an uproar. People jumped cheering to their feet. They rushed past the wooden barrier separating the court proper from the audience room, grabbed Henry, hoisted him on their shoulders and carried him cheering into the streets, around the town and then to Tom Jefferson's chambers. The celebration of the victory lasted all night. The news spread like a brush fire through all the colonies. The name of Patrick Henry, well-enough known in Virginia, was now known in every one of the colonies. It was a name people associated with liberty—a new kind of liberty based upon natural rights.

When the hubbub died down, Tom Jefferson began to think the case over. There was no doubt in his mind that Henry's talent for oratory rather than his knowledge of law had won the day. But there was a danger in this. If oratory were misapplied, then good laws, arrived at after a great deal of reasoning and investigation, could be set aside under the emotional sway of an orator. Tom decided to look into the legal aspects of an established Church—to see whether there was any body of law making it proper for a government to set up an official religion and tax

people, irrespective of their private beliefs, to support that religion.

His studies took him back through English law to Anglo-Saxon law, from which English law derived. To read the old Anglo-Saxon laws as they were laid down he had to study Anglo-Saxon. He mastered the language but could find nowhere in the early laws any legal relationship between the Saxon kings and the Christian religion. He discovered that, in the course of centuries, King and Church had found it to their advantage mutually to support each other. But there was no warrant at all for a king or any government to control the conscience of the people. The situation had been foisted upon the public gradually and without their knowledge. In short, what Henry had known instinctively to be a natural right—freedom of worship—Thomas Jefferson found to be so not only by instinct but by patient search through scores of lawbooks.

He suspected that there might be many other natural rights of the people which in course of time had been eroded away. These rights had been taken from the people because the people were not conscious of their existence. Some of them were laid out in the great document, Magna Carta, signed by King John of England at the insistence of his barons. But there were many many others which had been forfeited or were perhaps in danger of being lost through the ignorance of the general public.

He spoke with Patrick Henry about these rights, and the two debated whether some kind of new Magna Carta was not needed which would establish principles that no court had the right to violate. Tom had read the works of Locke, the English philosopher, dealing with the theory of government, and he ardently believed that governments should be established by the consent of the people as Locke propounded, and the form of government should be changed when needed to coincide with the will of the people. He had had many talks on this subject with Patrick Henry. Though Henry loved dancing and hunting and company, he could be serious too, and was never so serious as when he suspected that some wrong was being foisted on the people of his beloved Virginia.

Meanwhile, Jefferson continued with his studies. He worked out a heroic schedule for himself. He got out of bed as soon as it

was dawn, and was up until midnight studying his books. His studies took him into every area of science and thought—agriculture, chemistry, anatomy, astronomy, philosophy, ethics, history and religion. He bought books by the dozen, not merely to read but to study. He started keeping a record of his own about his work in a journal which he called his Commonplace Book. In this he noted anything that particularly struck him during his studies —quotations from Shakespeare and summaries of legal decisions, entered side by side with observations on the movement of the planets and the temperature at midday on a particular date.

He even found time to play his violin, and for twelve years reckoned that he practiced three hours a day. If there was a good play at the playhouse, Jefferson found time to see it. If a case of any interest was being argued in court, Jefferson was there listening to the arguments advanced and later looking up the legal precedents. One of his friends, John Page, marveled at the discipline young Jefferson displayed in all things. He would tear himself away from any pleasure if his watch told him that it was time to get to work. Even in the middle of an animated discussion, Tom Jefferson would look at his watch and excuse himself, saying he had to work but begging that the discussion be continued later.

Work, tedious to others, was his delight. As athletes train to climb mountains, so Tom Jefferson trained. But the mountains he was to climb were those of the mind, from whose peaks he would get a breathtaking view of the future of free men.

6

THE Seven Years' War, and that branch of it fought in America which came to be known as the French and Indian Wars, ended in 1763. Britain had won a great victory over France, an ancient foe, but at an enormous cost. She had had to maintain armies in Europe, in India and in America. She had had to keep big fleets at sea ranging the world from the Spanish coast to the shores

of India and of Massachusetts. Her people had been taxed and double- and triple-taxed with the greatest ingenuity to support such a vast endeavor. Now came the need for even more revenue so that Britain could safeguard what she had won during the war—her new possessions in India, and her thirteen colonies in America, now for the first time free of any threat of a French envelopment.

The thirteen American colonies, in Britain's view, had not behaved very well during the French and Indian Wars. They were separate colonies with separate charters (in cases where they had charters) and with separate Governors appointed by the King, and with separate legislative bodies. They ran themselves to the extent they were allowed, as separate little countries jealous of any special privilege a neighboring colony might be granted. Those that had a frontier with the old French territories, like Virginia and Pennsylvania, sent men and supplies actively to the support of Britain's army during the French and Indian Wars.

A young surveyor and planter, George Washington of Virginia, served with distinction during the war. On his return to Virginia where he was captain of the Virginia militia, he was given a reception that eclipsed anything in living memory. Taking his seat as a new delegate to the House of Burgesses in 1759, he received the thanks of the House for his services to the colony. He rose to reply but could make none. He blushed and stammered and trembled, but not a word came from him.

"Sit down, Mr. Washington," said the speaker. "Your modesty equals your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language I possess."

But other colonies, those on the coast or those having no border on the western frontier, took as little part in the French and Indian Wars as they could. Rather, they used the war to increase the powers of their legislatures. When the royal Governor asked for supplies or for men the legislatures refused them, or decided to appoint committees to consider them, or delayed in one way or another until some privilege they wished was granted them. Often they asked for privileges the Governors had no power to grant. The Governors, hard pressed by the commanders in the field for men and supplies, were sometimes forced to grant these privileges anyway, hoping to justify themselves later by pointing to the urgency of war.

As for the merchants—the shipping men importing and exporting goods—many of those in the New England states saw in the war with France an opportunity for profit. Their big trade was in molasses obtained from the French West Indies. The war cut that trade off and the price of molasses went temptingly high. The Governor would then be petitioned to allow a ship to go past the British blockade of the French islands under a flag of truce to release American hostages, who, it was claimed, were suffering terrible torments in French jails. Pleading letters from them were produced, begging for relief and saying that the alternative was a lingering death. Under such pressure the Governors would at times allow a ship to sail to bring back these prisoners. Public subscriptions quickly raised the ransom money demanded by the French. The ship sailed and returned—carrying hostages to be sure, but laden down also with molasses which was smuggled ashore at night and later disposed of at great profit.

The war indeed had the effect common to wars—it turned traders into smugglers. Massachusetts merchants of high renown traded illegally with the same French enemy against whom, in the dark forests of the Ohio Valley, Washington was leading the militia of Virginia.

There was little unity then among the thirteen American colonies in the war against France. Each looked to its own welfare, and many were mostly concerned with seeing that they gave no more to the war in men and materials than their neighbors. Some flatly declared that none of their men or materials were to be used outside of the territory of the colony. Maryland would fight the French if the French ever got to Maryland. But not before. So it went. But though the war did not unify the colonies, the peace that followed did, for it confronted them all with the same threat—the threat of taxation to pay Britain's war debts.

Studying his lawbooks in Williamsburg, talking over world affairs with George Wythe and Patrick Henry, with Dabney Carr and John Page, Tom Jefferson became interested in the question of taxation and the theories that lay behind taxes.

The first postwar tax levied by Prime Minister Grenville in England on the American colonies was a tax on molasses. It hardly affected Virginia, whose principal item of trade was tobacco. It fell heavily, however, on the merchants of New Eng-

land who had been in the habit of importing molasses from the French and Dutch as well as the British West Indies. The molasses was turned in New England into rum and found a profitable market. To pay for the molasses, the New England merchants exported lumber, horses, hides and other produce to the West Indian islands.

The new tax imposed a duty of threepence a gallon on molasses imported from any of the non-British West Indian islands. The effect on the New Englanders was disastrous. They couldn't pay such a tax. They had to get their molasses in the future from the British islands only. The planters in the British islands obtained a monopoly in the export of molasses to the American colonies. They raised the price. Soon the wharfs of New York and Boston were overstocked with unsalable lumber warping in the weather.

Such a flood of lumber had already gone to the British West Indian planters that they needed no more. The same held for horses and other exports. And the New Englanders couldn't pay for the molasses in money. Money was very short in the colonies. There wasn't enough available in New England to make the purchase of molasses a cash trade.

Still, the Molasses Act or Sugar Act, as it was called, did not hurt Virginia, and most Virginians were of the opinion that it wasn't their business. But Tom Jefferson and Patrick Henry and the younger men of Williamsburg took a different view. They studied copies of the act and found that in the preamble mention was made of the need for "new provisions and regulations . . . for improving the revenue of this Kingdom [Britain] . . . it is just and necessary that a revenue should be raised [the act read] . . . for defraying the expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the same."

"Very curious," said Patrick Henry. "I wonder what's the meaning behind that."

"It could mean that the British Parliament considers it has the right to tax us here in the colonies to raise revenue to meet Britain's expenses," said Jefferson.

"Oh, come now!" said Dabney Carr. "They've never done that before. They've imposed duties regulating trade. That's all this is. It's a duty on importing French and Dutch molasses. And I think

it's a good one. I hear those New England merchants made fortunes during the war, trading in molasses with the enemy while we in Virginia were fighting the French."

"Dabney," said Tom with a smile, "it never does to be deceived by the obvious. Obviously this is a tax on foreign molasses. But what isn't so obvious is that the opening phrases of this act assert the right of Britain to 'establish new provisions and regulations' to raise money. And note that this is an act—it isn't a proposal. It has already received the approval of Parliament. I tell you that, with such an act in my hands, I could defend Britain's right to tax her American colonies before any court in the world."

"You read too much into it, Tom," said Dabney Carr. "You've spent so long with your nose in books that you're losing your balance."

Tom Jefferson shook his head. "Liberties are lost because people are too lazy to read the law closely," he said. "There isn't a doubt in my mind that this act establishes the right of Britain to tax us in America, if need be, to pay Britain's debts."

"Well, we're British, aren't we?" said John Page. "The King's our King. What's wrong with being taxed?"

"There's this wrong with it," said Patrick Henry; "we have no say in England's Parliament. By thunder, they could take every penny we make—suck us dry and pay no taxes themselves. And we wouldn't be able to do a thing about it."

"You're talking about Englishmen," retorted Page. "Not Frenchmen or Prussians. They're a free people. They are not tyrants. They respect liberty."

"They're a free people," said Patrick Henry dryly, "because they fought for every freedom they got—fought their own government."

"Meaning?" asked Page.

"Meaning nobody gives you freedom. You have to fight to obtain it and fight to protect it. That's the plain history of the whole world, Mr. Page."

"By thunder," said Page, "you're a man who is readily moved perilously close to treason."

"You know what treason is?" demanded Patrick Henry hotly.

"It's an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow a government—and a fig for treason, I say."

Jefferson shook his head. "I don't agree with that," he said. "I'd say that treason was an attempt to deprive any man of that freedom which is his gift from birth. Governments can be guilty of treason as well as the people who are governed."

There were others in Virginia who were equally concerned over the Sugar Act. Prominent among them was George Washington. He was thirty-two years of age at the time, a tall, athletic, rawboned man, very mild in his behavior and somewhat sober in his dress for a Virginian. He didn't affect the Dutch and French clothes and laces of the other Virginia planters, and had no liveried Negro outriders on the horses that brought his coach to Williamsburg. Indeed, he didn't often use his coach, but preferred to ride to Williamsburg on a horse whenever he had to visit the capital as a recently elected member of the House of Burgesses.

He had a great reputation as a military leader and he was now making another reputation as a man of common sense. He stood halfway between the conservative and wealthy planters of the Tidewater, who would bend over backward rather than give direct offense to England, and the fiery representatives of the Piedmont, like Patrick Henry, who detested English interference in the colonies' affairs.

Washington had many friends and business acquaintances in London, who kept him well supplied with the latest news. He had heard that the King intended to maintain a standing army of 10,000 soldiers in the American colonies, and that £300,000 a year was to be raised from the colonies to pay for their keep and also help reduce Britain's war debt. He spoke of these things to the other delegates of the House of Burgesses. He spoke gravely and quietly, which in itself made a big impression upon his fellow legislators.

"In sum," one of them asked, "what do you think is likely to happen?"

"In sum," replied Washington, "I think this Sugar Act is but the start. There are likely to be other measures that will fall as heavily on Virginia as this present act falls upon New York and Massachusetts."

"What do you know of this man Grenville—what kind of temper has he?"

"I hear he is stiff and dour and set in his opinions," replied Washington. "You will remember that it was said of Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer under the old government, that his knowledge of accounts was confined to reckoning tavern bills and that a sum of five figures was, to him, an impenetrable mystery? Well, Grenville is the opposite. He is a financier who could himself count every penny that comes into the British treasury and reckon the compound interest on it without resort to pen and paper. That's what I hear from London."

"A hard man to do business with, then."

Washington nodded. "So it seems," he said. "But we must do business with him. The people of Britain are so heavily taxed they will not pay another penny. No measure for raising additional taxes in Britain has any chance of passing the Houses of Parliament. There would be rioting. The sentiment is that we in the colonies have gone by tax-free so far. Unless I am mistaken, we are all about to be presented with a big bill on which payment will be enforced."

The big bill was not long coming. It came in the form of the Stamp Act—a measure which Grenville regarded as extremely mild and one to which the colonies could not possibly take any exception. However, to be absolutely sure that no one in America could claim that the act was suddenly imposed on the people without anyone having a chance to debate it, Prime Minister Grenville announced that the act would not be enforced until several months after its passage through the House of Commons. The colonial legislatures would then have plenty of time to debate it and pass their views on to London. Also, people would have time to get used to it. The act was passed in January 1765, and was to come into effect in November of the same year.

Thomas Jefferson, though still at times putting in fifteen hours' study a day at his lawbooks, was often at the mansion of Governor Fauquier as a dinner guest. Fauquier liked Jefferson. He liked him for his learning, his hard work, the depth of his mind, his excellent manners and his ability to conduct himself with grace in the highest society. He often spoke to him about his reading, and recommended to him the writings of Boling-

broke, one of the greatest authors on the theory of government at that time. He was not offended when, after dinner, Tom would excuse himself from the table saying he had to go back to his studies.

"You do well to work hard now, Mr. Jefferson," Fauquier would say. "A month's hard work now will save you a year's frustration later in life. Depend upon it."

But sometimes Tom would stay after dinner, particularly if George Wythe or Peyton Randolph, speaker of the Virginia Assembly and a kinsman of Tom's on his mother's side, was among the guests. Then the talk would be about the impending Stamp Act, for Fauquier wanted to sound out his guests and report to the home government on feeling toward the act.

These discussions never became angry. They were an exchange among gentlemen on a public matter. But it was plain to Tom that there was a deep difference of opinion between the Virginians, on the one hand, and Fauquier, representing the British crown, on the other.

Fauquier put the British point of view and put it well. "We've been paying a stamp tax in England for years," he said. "It is the lightest of our imposts, I assure you, gentlemen. And it works for the public good. No document is legal unless it has a stamp upon it—a certificate of marriage, a will, a transfer of goods from one party to another, clearance papers for a ship leaving harbor—all these documents in England have a stamp on them. They are illegal without them. There is a benefit, then, in making their documents legal and that benefit I am sure will appeal to you, gentlemen, who are so learned in the law. How many times has a document presented in court—a will, say, or a deed of land—been contested as improperly drawn? There are a hundred such cases a month. But with a stamp on them, the documents are legal, must be so accepted in court, and there is no argument about them. In all conscience I must say I regard the act as beneficial in every way."

"It is the wrong time to impose such an act, sir," said Peyton Randolph. "Things are in a bad way in the colonies. The end of the recent war has brought the usual depression. Unemployment is high in the northern colonies and we begin to feel the pinch here in Virginia. Boston is full of unemployed and New York

also. I hear that in Rhode Island, land values as a result of unemployment have tumbled to half their previous price. The Sugar Act fell heavily on the people. To follow up now with this Stamp Act will beggar them."

"Oh come, sir," said Fauquier. "These postwar depressions are only temporary. Before the act is in effect all will be prosperous again, no doubt. I note," he added with a smile, "that you still ride in your coach and six, and Mrs. Randolph's new Paris gown is, I assure you, as elegant as anything that graces the ballrooms of London. What do you think of this matter, Mr. Jefferson?"

"I think it wrong in principle," said Tom. "It is a matter of our being taxed without our having a say in the matter. It opens the door wide to increasing taxation on the same basis—taxation without representation."

"You're mistaken there, I fancy, Mr. Jefferson," said Fauquier. "Certainly you have a say in the matter. There is a whole year in which to debate the tax and in which to present your opinions through your own assemblies in proper form. The Virginia Assembly is assured of an ear in London, as are the various legislatures of all the other colonies. Your own Dr. Franklin is there on your behalf as Colonial Agent, and is close to the Prime Minister —far closer indeed than I am," he added ruefully.

"That is true," said Tom. "But no petition passed by the Virginia Assembly will ever be read on the floor of the House of Commons if it concerns this tax. There is a rule of the House of Commons, if I am correctly informed, that no petition from the colonies affecting financial matters may be introduced on the floor of the House."

"The reason for the rule," said Fauquier, "is that the whole business of the House would otherwise be hopelessly delayed by hosts of petitions from all the colonies every time a customs officer collected a little duty from an American merchant. It is a very reasonable rule. There are other avenues of protest open to the colonies."

"But there is no representation, sir," said Tom firmly. "An Englishman in England, if taxed, has a representative in the Parliament that taxes him through whom he can directly protest. No American has any such representative. We are voiceless in

Parliament, and if heard at all, are heard only through a third party who is not a citizen of the country."

"Well, you're heard with remarkable effect," said Fauquier. "Colonel Isaac Barré made an impassioned defense of you in the House of Commons, denouncing the tax and calling you all Sons of Liberty. In Boston and New York some of the rougher elements are organizing themselves into bands and calling themselves Sons of Liberty, after Barré, and causing all kinds of trouble. I'm sure we won't have that kind of nonsense here in Virginia." He glanced at Peyton Randolph, the most influential man in the Assembly.

"Quite right," said Randolph. "We haven't the same rabble to deal with here. A few hotheads among the younger delegates—but not riotous."

"Mr. Jefferson is acquainted with a few of the 'hotheads,' " said Fauquier with a smile. "That is, if I may for the moment describe Mr. Patrick Henry as a hothead. Though I will admit privately that I rejoiced in his victory in the parsons' case. It was a victory for me. What do you say, Mr. Jefferson? Do you know his views on this Stamp Act?"

"I know he is opposed to it, sir," said Tom. "And I must add in all honesty, so am I."

"Well," said Fauquier, "it is the mark of youth to be rebellious. I note that the younger people oppose the act on principles of representation. The older sort are not so concerned with principles as with the imposing of a new tax during a time of depression."

"Allow me to correct you," said George Wythe gently. "We older sort are also opposed to the act on principle. We believe that as Englishmen at home would not submit to taxation without representation, neither should we. But we are not hotheads. We do not believe the mother country a tyrant, nor the British Parliament a body set upon enslaving the people of the colonies. We believe that by representation, decently made through our assemblies, the matter will be resolved. We trust that that will be so."

"That has always been the case in the past, gentlemen," said Fauquier smoothly. "And I think the mother country, after the expenses of the recent war, and with her people at home out-

rageously taxed, may expect, without injustice, to raise additional revenue here in the colonies, particularly since one outcome of the war was to make us here safe from the French. I give you my word, gentlemen, that the money to be raised by the Stamp Tax is to be spent here, and not, as some say, on reducing Britain's national debt. It will be spent on maintaining troops in the country—some ten thousand, I believe—for the purpose of protecting the colonies from the French and from the Indian tribes."

He smiled at his guests. "The ladies, I am sure, will have no objection to the troops," he said. "Nothing seems to make a man so handsome or dashing as to be wearing the uniform of one of his Majesty's regiments. The King's officers were in great demand at balls and levees, as you recall, during the recent war. The money raised here will be spent here and will in itself serve to stimulate trade. Upon my word, the more I think of the measure, the more enchanting it appears—providing escorts for the ladies, protection for the colonies, a stimulus to trade, avoiding litigation over documents, and when applied to marriage licenses, making all weddings thoroughly legal . . . something I know you gentlemen will agree is in the best interests of society. The young man in love, lavishing gifts on his bride, will hardly hold back from paying twenty shillings stamp tax on a wedding license to make her fully his own."

When the party broke up, Tom walked home to his lodgings with George Wythe. "The Governor puts forward a persuasive case for the Stamp Tax," said Wythe, eying Tom closely.

"That is the Governor's job," said Tom. "But the Governor avoids the principle. And the principle is one of no taxation without representation."

"I think there is likely to be trouble," said Wythe slowly. "I am not a man to compromise on a principle. But the part of wisdom is to maintain the principle with as little trouble as possible."

They passed the Raleigh Tavern. Looking through the leaded windows of the Apollo room they saw a crowd of younger men gathered around Patrick Henry, who, pulling at intervals on a pipe of tobacco, was talking heatedly to them. Though they could not hear what he was saying there was no doubt that he was discussing the Stamp Act, for it was the topic of all such

gatherings. George Wythe looked from the tavern down the street to where the House of Burgesses loomed in the moonlight.

"In a democratic society," he said slowly, "there are two sources of government—the tavern and the legislative assembly. And often the tavern is the superior body and rules the other."

7

THE delay in the enforcing of the Stamp Act, which Prime Minister Grenville had hoped would result in the colonies' getting used to the idea and accepting it, had a contrary effect.

Rather than bow to the tax, the more the people of the thirteen colonies thought about it, the more they resented it. There were riots in New York and Philadelphia instigated often by printers who, as publishers of newspapers, saw their circulation threatened by the tax which would have to be paid on every paper purchased in the colonies.

There were riots by tavernkeepers who would now have to pay a tax for serving liquor. Some of these riots were brought about by self-interest. But beyond this was a sense of outrage that the people were to be taxed by a parliament to which they could not elect a single representative. The resentment seemed stronger and more bitter among the small farmers and traders, artisans and storekeepers.

Tom Jefferson noted that in Virginia the higher placed a man was in society, the less forthright was his objection to the Stamp Act. Some indeed took the view suggested by Governor Fauquier that the act was a most benevolent measure, and applied for positions as Stamp Tax collectors. The post would bring them as much as £300 a year—a nice sum. It also brought opportunity to put others in the way of making a little money as district collectors, thus enabling a Stamp Tax collector to build up a little empire of people who were indebted to him.

Jefferson, though he belonged to the higher class of Virginia society, sympathized with the tradesmen and storekeepers and

little farmers. All but voiceless in their own legislative assembly, where the rich planters were overwhelmingly represented, they had no influence in England at all. Yet they were the people on whom the tax would fall most heavily—paid in every receipt they issued for goods bought or sold, in every newspaper they bought, in every tankard of beer or tot of rum they drank at the end of the day. The gentle George Wythe, Tom reflected, was right to say that the tavern was the superior legislative body. The tavern was the parliament of these unrepresented people. It was here that they discussed their grievances; here that they learned that their fellows in other colonies felt much the same way about the Stamp Tax as they did. And it was here, without formal debate or the passage of any resolution, that they decided they would not continue voiceless and unrepresented in their government.

A big change came over the colonies in the period of grace before the enforcement of the Stamp Act. It was a change that Tom Jefferson noted and that Patrick Henry helped to bring about. In essence it was a change from separation to unity. People started to think of the colonies as a whole. Massachusetts was no longer foreign to Virginia or Pennsylvania foreign to South Carolina. Two words began to occur more and more frequently in discussion—"America" and "liberty."

Soon the words were combined and became "American liberty." At first the phrase meant the same liberty for Americans as was extended to Englishmen. After a little while, the phrase began to mean more than that—a liberty greater for Americans than that which was afforded Englishmen of the day; in short, a liberty based on "natural rights" with which neither King nor Parliament nor House of Burgesses nor any legislative body anywhere could tamper.

The small farmers and people from the Piedmont elected Patrick Henry to the House of Burgesses in 1765, the year of the Stamp Act.

He soon proved his worth.

The Treasurer of the colony, a former speaker of the House of Burgesses, was John Robinson, a wealthy, generous, kindly planter of the Tidewater. As Treasurer he had control of public funds. Quite often he lent money to his planter friends tempo-

rarily in need. First he lent his own money, but when he was short himself, he took to lending the public money, quite sure that his friends, being gentlemen, and he being a gentleman, the debts would be repaid, the public treasury reimbursed, and that there was nothing dishonest in the action.

But the debts were not always repaid. The Tidewater planters, living lavishly, paying huge prices for blood horses and coaches built in London, for dresses for their wives made of the best European materials, and spending heavily on entertainments that lasted a week or more, did not take in as much as they paid out. Far from being able to repay their original debts, they applied to the obliging John Robinson for more funds. He supplied them—from the public treasury. The time arrived when John Robinson discovered that the whole of his own private fortune was not sufficient to cover the funds he had borrowed from the public coffers to accommodate his friends. And his friends, gentlemen every one of them to the last inch, were not businessmen. They couldn't pay back the debts.

Ruin and disgrace then confronted Robinson. And so he consulted among the members of the Assembly, many of whom had received loans from him. They came up with a plan which would save the situation. They proposed a bill under which money might be advanced to individuals in need from public funds—making the public treasury a loan agency. It was argued in support of the bill that the advancing of funds to individuals from the public coffers would help them to develop or buy property which would increase the wealth of the colony of Virginia. That might have been true. But the bill would also save John Robinson from ruin. If the bill passed, he would thus officially transfer to the treasury the loans he had unwisely made to his friends, making them legal.

When Henry read the bill, he became suspicious. He knew nothing of John Robinson's loans, but he wondered how many poor farmers in the Piedmont would ever get a loan from the public treasury to buy a plow or a couple of oxen. He suspected that none would. The loans would go to the men with big estates who would spend the money, not on pioneering but on parties. He rose in the House of Burgesses to oppose the bill. He was a new member, roughly dressed as always, with an outdoorsman's

awkwardness which seemed exaggerated in the dignified quiet of the chamber. Tom Jefferson stood outside the door to listen to what Henry had to say. Tom was not a member of the chamber and so had to stand in the hallway, straining to hear what was said.

Henry did not falter in his address. He launched vigorously into an attack against lending public money to private individuals. What was the matter with borrowing money through the usual channels—from friends or from bankers or other sources? he asked. Any man of character and of honesty could obtain funds in this way. Those who could not were lacking in character or determination or the desire to work.

"What, sir!" he cried, addressing the speaker. "Is it proposed to reclaim the spendthrift from his dissipation and extravagance by filling his pockets with money?" And then he turned and surveyed the rich and idle planters of the Tidewater, who reddened at his words. The whole proposition, Henry went on, was based on favoritism—favoritism which would support the wealthy in their idleness at the expense of the poor who paid the taxes.

His one speech killed the bill. All the representatives from the poorer sections, from the Piedmont, voted against it. Those voting for it were from the wealthy Tidewater. But there were not enough of them present. The bill failed to pass, and Virginia had witnessed the open split, long in developing, between the pioneers of the Piedmont and the aristocracy of the Tidewater. But Henry had attacked the bill on principle, not out of enmity for Robinson. Robinson's mishandling of public funds only came to light four years later at his death. Until then, his fellow planters, forming a conspiracy of self-interest, kept the matter hidden.

Not long after that came Henry's attack in the House of Burgesses on the Stamp Act. He had spoken against it often enough in the Apollo room of the Raleigh Tavern and with his friends. But during the actual debate in the House of Burgesses he was either absent or said little. Tom Jefferson was puzzled by Henry's action. Why was he so fiery in private but so meek in the House of Burgesses? Was he afraid perhaps that a charge of treason might be brought against him? Was he, as the richer men

said, merely a braggart, full of sound and threats but lacking in courage when a major issue was to be faced? For this Stamp Act wasn't an issue concerning the payment of parsons, or the loaning of money from the Virginia treasury. It concerned the King and Parliament of England. Whoever attacked the act attacked the King, the King's ministers and the King's Parliament.

All through the debate then, Henry remained quietly in the background, while the Burgesses expressed their regrets over the act and patiently framed a petition to the King to put the act aside and framed also a memorial to the House of Commons, objecting to the act with the greatest reasonableness and courtesy.

Peyton Randolph, Tom's kinsman, took a prominent part in these debates, steering the language so that the protest was made but no offense was given in making it. Then, when all was done to the satisfaction of the Assembly, and the wording of the petition to the King and the memorial to the House of Commons approved to the last comma, a vote was taken to send them both off. The business had been attended to. Members began packing to return to their mansions up the river. Many of them left. Still Henry held his peace.

When most of the Tidewater representatives had gone home, although the Assembly was still in session, Henry at last rose and asked leave to address the House on the subject of the Stamp Act and to present some motions affecting it for the consideration of members. The Speaker was astounded. The matter had been dealt with. Why reopen it now? But he had no right to refuse to hear Henry.

Henry cut the same unimpressive figure. There were titters at his homely clothes, his unpowdered hair, his curious awkwardness which made him, when standing, seem all elbows and knees. The speaker had a little difficulty securing a hearing for him. But as soon as he started talking, there were no more titters. A stillness like death descended on the House, broken only by the voice of Patrick Henry, now so low his listeners could scarcely catch what he was saying, now so strong and loud his words seemed to fill not only the chamber but the whole world.

Henry went straight to the point—denouncing the pretensions of the British Parliament to levy taxes on the people of the American colonies. Americans, he said, had the same rights as

Englishmen. No Englishman would submit to being taxed without representation. No American should do so either. The rights of Englishmen and Americans were bound together in the matter and were equally threatened. To tax Americans without representation would open the door to the taxation of Englishmen without representation, and so ancient liberties, most desperately won, were now endangered. What confronted the people of Virginia was the growing presence of tyranny which had been resisted time and again in the great days of Greece and Rome and of the mother country, England.

"Caesar," cried Henry, "had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third—"

Suddenly he was interrupted by cries of "Treason . . . treason . . ." from all parts of the chamber. He waited until the hubbub had died down.

"And George the Third," he continued, "may profit by their example. Sir [addressing the Speaker], if *this* be treason, make the most of it."

Then he took a sheaf of untidily folded papers from his pocket and said he wished to move seven resolves bearing on the rights of the people of Virginia, for the approval of the House.

The first five of these resolves were to the effect that Americans possessed all the rights of Englishmen; that the principle of no taxation without representation was an essential part of the British constitution, which applied fully to all Americans; that, as a result, it was plain that Virginia alone enjoyed the right to tax Virginians, since Virginians had representation only in their own House of Burgesses.

The sixth and seventh resolves shook the members into a profound silence—partly in horror at the daring, partly in fright at their significance. One declared that Virginians were "not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatever designed to impose any taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the laws or ordinances of the General Assembly."

The other stated that "any person who shall, by speaking or writing, assert or maintain that any person or persons other than the General Assembly of the colony, have any right or power to impose or lay any taxation on the people here, shall be deemed an enemy of his Majesty's colony."

After the first paralyzed silence which greeted the reading of these resolutions, an uproar broke out in the chambers. The Piedmont and up-country members of the Assembly were cheering Henry loudly. The Tidewater gentlemen were shouting him down, denouncing him as a hothead whose excesses would bring heavy penalties from England. The Speaker had great difficulty in restoring order so that individual members could express their views on the resolves. Against Henry were many of Tom Jefferson's friends—the moderate and reasonable George Wythe, with whom Tom was still studying law; Peyton Randolph, at that time Attorney General of Virginia; and also against him was Colonel Richard Bland, an eminent student of constitutional law, whose face had something of the color and texture of the old parchments which he loved to study.

The opposition insisted that the petition and memorial already sent to Parliament and the King covered all that Henry proposed and in language which would not give offense. No reply had been received to these communications. To come roaring in now with these inflammatory resolves would ensure that whatever reply *was* received was contrary to the colony's interests. But Henry won the victory. Although his sixth and seventh resolutions failed to pass, the first five, asserting the right of Virginians to tax themselves, were passed, some by very narrow margins. Indeed, the fifth resolution, passed by only 20 to 19, was subsequently ruled out.

Nonetheless Patrick Henry, a member of the House of Burgesses for less than a month, had secured a clear victory over men who had been delegates for a dozen years and more. He had outmaneuvered them by waiting until there were only 39 members out of a total of 116 present in the House. With a tiny minority from the Piedmont he had won a victory over the huge majority from the Tidewater—and won it on a crucial issue, challenging the authority of the King and his Parliament over the people of Virginia.

"By thunder," cried Peyton Randolph to Tom Jefferson as he stormed angrily from the chamber, "I would have given five hundred pounds for one more vote. Five hundred pounds. But the damage is done now and the giddy hotheads have carried the day."

8

THE Stamp Act was followed by the Stamp Act riots—riots which erupted in every one of the thirteen colonies with a violence that astounded the royal Governors and their intimate circle of advisers. Patrick Henry became, overnight, not merely a Virginia hero but a national hero—for there was beginning to be an American nation now, as the colonies united under the banner of "No Taxation without Representation." His Seven Resolves, known as the Virginia Resolves, were printed in every newspaper of importance in the colony. Among the conservatives they produced a sense of outrage and some called them treason. But the overwhelming majority of Americans hailed them as sacred—resolves for which they were prepared to fight and indeed to die.

Henry became the hero of the Sons of Liberty—bands of young people (and some of them older) who organized to resist enforcement of the Stamp Act. Stampmasters, appointed in England but all of them Americans, were tarred and feathered and chased out of town, and their stocks of stamps seized and burned by the Sons of Liberty. Their houses were wrecked, their furniture broken up, and some of them fled several hundred miles from colony to colony, in fear of their lives, only to find that the Sons of Liberty in one colony would inform the Sons of Liberty in another colony of their presence. There was nothing for them to do but resign, making enforcement of the Stamp Act impossible.

Colonel Mercer, a man with whom Tom Jefferson was acquainted, was appointed Stamp Collector, or Stampmaster, for Virginia. His case was typical. He returned from England with his commission in his pocket to find, to his astonishment, that he was being hanged in effigy in Williamsburg. The students of William and Mary College danced around the effigy dangling from a tree. They were joined by back-country men, in town to

attend the session of the House of Burgesses. Merchants and planters paraded through the town demanding that the Colonel resign his post. He thought the matter over and asked Governor Fauquier to accept his resignation. The Governor refused. The Colonel then announced that he would not act as Stampmaster of the colony even if his resignation had been refused. On the instant, he was the hero of the crowd. The effigy was pulled down and he was carried through the town on the shoulders of the cheering mob. The Colonel after further thought took ship back again to England immediately, announcing that private business demanded his presence in London.

As for Patrick Henry, there were some close to the Governor who thought that his speech to the House of Burgesses was treasonable. A rumor went about that he would be charged with treason. But soon the Governor heard that the people would never stand for any such charge. He wrote to Colonial Secretary Conway in London that the Virginians regarded Henry as a "noble patriot" and declared "if the least injury was offered to him, they'd stand by him to the last drop of their blood. Some of them muttered betwixt their teeth, 'Let worst come to the worst, we'll call the French to our succor.' " It was a strange turn of events, for only five years earlier these same Virginians had been at war with France, fighting side by side with the British redcoats.

Thomas Jefferson was twenty-two during the Stamp Act riots, and still studying law under George Wythe. His hero was Patrick Henry, and he was enormously impressed by Henry's oratory. Whenever Henry had to plead a case in the Williamsburg courts or rose to address the House of Burgesses, Jefferson was there, utterly carried away by the power of his words.

Tom began to study oratory himself, and in this he was assisted by Wythe. Wythe established a moot court—that is, a pretense court—before which students argued cases given to them. Several eminent lawyers sat as judges, and the more prominent citizens were present as an audience. Jefferson, who had bought a book on oratory, tried his powers before this court. But he soon realized that he had neither the voice nor the leaping imagination needed. He argued well but always in a neatly reasoned pattern, proceeding step by step from one premise to another to the final

conclusion. No one could knock a hole in his reasoning. But he was unable to work on the emotions of his listeners as Henry did. His voice was well modulated but quiet. After talking for any length of time, it became husky.

"You reason like Socrates, Tom," George Wythe said. "But you are no Cicero. You will never move an audience by sheer oratory. Forget the dramatic effects. Stick to the pen and the powers of your mind, and you will be one of the leading lawyers of the colony."

In 1767, when he was twenty-four years of age, Tom passed his examinations in law and was admitted to the bar of the Colony of Virginia. He opened a small office to practice in Williamsburg. He was wealthy, well known, well respected, but untried as a lawyer. He wanted to be a success as a lawyer, and live off his earnings in the profession rather than off the money he had inherited. But, as with most young lawyers, the first cases that came to him were lost causes or concerned clients who were able to pay very little for his services.

One of these early cases made a deep impression on Tom and recalled the time of his father's death when the slaves had asked him to whom they now belonged. A mulatto slave named Howland called on him to ask him to petition the court to be freed from his master.

"On what grounds do you think you should be freed?" Tom Jefferson asked the man. Shuffling awkwardly in the presence of the elegant young lawyer, Howland told his story. His great-grandmother, he said, was a white woman and his great-grandfather a Negro slave. These two had had an illegitimate child, Howland's grandmother. The church wardens, who had authority in this matter, ruled that this girl should be the slave of the Negro's master until she was thirty-one years of age. But before she was thirty-one, she herself had given birth to a child. This child, Howland's mother, had been sold as a slave to a man named Netherland. When Howland was born he was pronounced the property of Netherland, who owned his mother.

"Mr. Jefferson," said the mulatto, "I am to be a slave until I am thirty-one years of age, as my mother was, my grandmother and my great-grandmother. I have to pay for whatever offense my great-grandmother committed when she gave birth to a Negro.

Mr. Jefferson, I have done nothing wrong myself and I think I should be a free man and not belong to someone else until I am thirty-one. If I marry and have a child before I am thirty-one, that child will be a slave. And that will go on, Mr. Jefferson, forever and ever."

The man could pay little or no money and Tom Jefferson didn't want any. He took the case, reading up the law on the matter back to the year 1705. Netherland hired a lawyer also to assert his right over Howland. The lawyer he hired was George Wythe—Tom Jefferson's former teacher. Student and professor then faced each other in court. Tom, after reviewing the laws concerning slavery as they applied to the case, referred to a greater law—the law of nature.

"I suppose it will not be pretended," he said addressing the court, "that the mother being a servant, the child would be a servant also, under the law of nature. . . . Under the law of nature all men are born free, everyone comes into the world with a right to his own person, which includes the liberty of moving and using it at his own will. This is what is called personal liberty, and is given him by the Author of nature, because it is necessary for his own sustenance. The reducing of the mother to servitude was a violation of the law of nature; surely then the same law cannot prescribe a continuance of the violation to her issue, and that too without end, for if it extends to any, it must be to every degree of descendants."

In the mouth of Patrick Henry, this would have been a ringing argument. From Jefferson's lips it came quietly, reasonably and sanely . . . and it failed. George Wythe was about to rise to present his case for the defendant but the court cut him short, and, without further discussion, ruled that Howland must remain a slave until he was thirty-one, and that if before then he fathered any children, they also would be slaves.

In the lobby outside the courtroom Jefferson turned in anguish to Wythe. "How can that be?" he cried. "How can such a terrible thing be done? How can the court sustain a law which enslaves one generation after another, so that the penalty of fatherhood is the slavery of the child?"

"Tom," said Wythe, "the law is the law and courts must uphold the law. That is their function. The courts have no

authority to change the law but must rule in accordance with it. Your case was lost, as you must have known, before you made your opening plea."

"But the law is a thoroughly bad law," cried Tom. "You know that yourself, Mr. Wythe. Why, you even set your own slaves free, holding slavery contrary to the laws of God. . . ." He stopped there, but the inference was plain. Why had his friend George Wythe, who had freed his own slaves, been willing to defend a man who wished to keep another in slavery? The unasked question was not lost on the subtle George Wythe.

"When a lawyer takes a case into court, Tom," he said, "he performs a service by demonstrating to the public the workings of a law to which they have given their sanction. If the law is a bad and an unjust law, then the lawyer brings this forcibly to the attention of the public by demanding that the law be enforced. And so the lawyers may stir the people to change bad laws by which the courts are bound. But the changing of laws is the province of the people through their elected representatives. If courts could change laws at will, then courts would soon become tyrannical and no man would be safe in his person or in his property."

"And yet," said Tom, "there are some rights of men which no court should have the power to take away. One of those rights is a man's personal liberty. Those rights should be put down in plain language and in writing, as sacred so that they can endure unviolated for all time."

Wythe looked at the young lawyer thoughtfully. "Practice law, Tom," he said. "See its workings. Plead your cases at the bar. You will there be better equipped to turn from the interpretation of law to the framing of law, if that is the course you wish to follow."

Thomas Jefferson took George Wythe's advice. He practiced as a lawyer all over the Colony of Virginia, taking cases in fifty-three of the fifty-six counties then in existence.

He defended the great men of the colony and the lowliest—the sleek, well-fed planters, the gaunt almost illiterate frontiersmen. He traveled hundreds of miles on horseback from court to court, summer and winter, sometimes staying at the plantations of friends, sometimes in a rough cabin in a clearing so recently made

in a Virginia forest that the corn was planted by hand among the stumps of felled trees. He liked mingling with the rough pioneers, listening to their stories of how they came to settle in a particular area.

Their riches lay in the little crops they managed to harvest, the little houses they put up from felled trees, and in their sons who helped to work the land and expand the holding. The independence of their lives, their self-reliance, and the way in which they obtained their living directly from the soil made a tremendous impression on Tom Jefferson. The pioneer farmer remained to him, throughout his life, the best type of human being, the person most to be admired. These frontiersmen, with whom Jefferson visited, rarely saw money and they needed it only to buy powder and bullets. Some spoke Gaelic and some German, and they were shy in the presence of the learned lawyer who could talk in Latin and Greek, Italian and French as well as English.

They had a profound respect for a man who could write; they considered it a feat beyond their own abilities to take a spoken word and put it down on paper. Sometimes they made the long trek to Williamsburg to see him at his law office about a deed to their lands or about making a legal trade of one piece of property for another. They told him of families who had moved farther on into the Blue Ridge Mountains, through the great forests of white oak, wild cherry, hemlock, pine, poplar and wild walnut.

"More are moving west, Mr. Jefferson, into the Indian country where the French used to be. Good country. Plenty of game and timber and water and good soil," they said. And Tom thought of the many times he had climbed a little mountain with his father and looked at the great empty lands westward. People were moving into them now, but there were more and more stretching hundreds of miles farther and farther west.

He questioned the frontiersmen about the kinds of trees and plants and wild life in the remote regions. They got to know that he liked to be told of these things. He was a queer kind of a lawyer—well read in the law, but interested in whether there were elk in the mountains and whether the red squirrels were seen in the forests each year earlier than the black or gray. He

made notes of these things in a little book, and because the pioneers liked him they told him the forest lore. He was never pompous with them, but listened to them man to man, as if they, in their deerskins, were just as good as he in his velvet breeches and coat of best Yorkshire cloth.

While he had been a law student under George Wythe, Tom visited Shadwell as often as he could and took his beloved sister Jane canoeing on the river or for walks through the woods around. She never married and looked forward eagerly to these visits from her brother. She studied his lawbooks and debated points of law with him, and they often played violin together. He was never so happy as when he was with his sister, who had begged that they should never be separated.

Then, in 1765, the year of the Stamp Act, Jane Jefferson died. Tom was inconsolable. He talked to no one for days, would not study or read, but went off by himself into the woods, returning to Shadwell at nighttime without a word to anybody. The pain of Jane's death was never eased. Fifty years later, he would talk about Jane as if she had died only the day before. He carried his grief to the end of his life, a heavy cross he could share with no one, for no one felt about Jane as he had. Yet his work had to go on. Grief could not rule his life. He returned to the task of living.

Visiting one plantation house after another, Jefferson became interested in architecture. He had a natural sense of grace when applied to building and had been shocked as a student by the appearance of William and Mary College in Williamsburg. The planters' mansions he found little better. They were built for utility in the first instance—close to the river and wharves where the ships docked. They commanded no great views, were often of wood and designed by their owners, who had little or no training in architecture.

Shadwell was like these houses—ample and graceless, a large box surrounded by smaller boxes where the servants and slaves lived. He decided to build a new and more graceful residence and break away from the old habit of building on low-lying ground near a river's edge. He would build his mansion on a mountain-top, so as to be able to see across the valleys and forests to the

Blue Ridge Mountains, and be above the low-lying clouds of winter.

The mountain he chose was the one he loved—the one he had climbed time and again with his father as a boy, and scores of times later with Jane. He called the mountain Monticello, Italian for "Little Mountain," and when he thought of building a house on it, decided that the house would be called the Hermitage. But a little later he decided to call the house, too, Monticello. Thomas Jefferson started work on Monticello two years after Jane died. He first drew up his plans, having studied several books on architecture. There were no real architects in Virginia at the time. He had then to be his own architect and master builder. The plans drawn, he began to calculate the number of bricks required for the mansion, the quantity of lumber, sand and cement and glass that would be needed for the splendid mansion he had in mind.

He had soon agreed with a local contractor to level 250 square feet on the mountaintop for the house site. Money was short in the colony, and for the work, the contractor got 180 bushels of wheat and 24 bushels of corn—something less than a bushel of grain for every square foot of land leveled. The glass for windows he ordered from England, the carpet for his dining room from Scotland. He went beyond the normal building requirements, ordering statuary and paintings from Italy. Actual building started in 1769 on one of the wings or out-chambers, as they were called, of the mansion. It was just as well that the start was made, for in February, 1770, old wooden Shadwell burned to the ground.

The fire was disastrous, its cause unknown. All of Tom Jefferson's library, collected from the earliest days, was destroyed in the fire as well as his notes and briefs on a number of law cases. The only books that survived were one or two that were lent to friends. The servants, knowing his love of music, got his violin out of the burning building along with some of the furniture. But the rest was lost and Tom Jefferson had to move his family into the one wing of Monticello which was nearing completion. Work was pushed from that day on but it was many years before Monticello was finished.

Thomas Jefferson started Monticello as a subject of King

George III. He was to finish it as one of the most prominent citizens of a country as yet unheard of—the United States of America.

9

WHILE he was a law student with George Wythe, Thomas Jefferson had fallen in love with Rebecca Burwell, daughter of Lewis Burwell, who at times had been acting Governor of Virginia. She was the belle of the colony, and tall, lanky Tom Jefferson was so entranced by her that he couldn't keep his mind on his lawbooks. He met her at many dances and social events, spent one rapturous evening dancing with her at a friend's plantation house, but was so shy that although he was determined to propose, he couldn't. He stuttered and mumbled various phrases that conveyed nothing but that he was in love. Rebecca Burwell married someone else, putting Tom out of his misery. Tom wished her and her bridegroom well, was best man at the wedding, and went back to his books. At twenty-seven he was one of the most eligible bachelors in Virginia, rich in his lands and from his practice of law, and now a member of the House of Burgesses.

He was welcome wherever he went, and, as a bachelor, he was constantly invited to dances and parties where the hosts eyed him as a fine catch for their marriageable daughters. Tom liked dancing and playing the violin and singing. He was a good social companion and a good man in the hunting field. But people began to say that he had the makings of a lifelong bachelor. His college friends had all married. Dabney Carr had married Tom's young sister Martha. They lived in a little house with a minimum of furniture and one or two servants and were so happy that Tom envied them. They had a son and doted on him; Tom liked to play with the boy and take him for walks when he visited his sister. He wished he had a family of his own. Life began to seem, for all his activity, a little empty.

But still he remained a bachelor, never serious about any particular girl after Rebecca Burwell married.

Then Tom Jefferson fell in love with Martha Wayles Skelton. She was the widow of a college friend, Bathurst Skelton. She had been married at seventeen, her husband having died two years later at the age of twenty-four. Tom had known them during their brief marriage and visited their home. He felt sorry for Martha Skelton, a widow at nineteen with a baby son. After her husband's death, she went to live with her father at his plantation called The Forest, at the confluence of the James and the Appomattox rivers.

What was between Tom and Martha at first was a friendship based on sympathy and mutual interest, for Martha Skelton, like Tom's sister Jane, was a good musician. Their relationship turned only slowly to love—but their love was all the stronger for its slow growth. They were married at The Forest on New Year's Day, 1772. Martha was twenty-three and Tom twenty-nine. The wedding festivities continued at The Forest until January 18, for the whole of Virginia society gathered there to congratulate the bride and groom. Then the two left for Monticello. Snow was falling and continued to fall heavily until the light carriage in which they were traveling could go no farther. Tom got out, unharnessed the horses, and bride and groom continued on horseback to their home. The snow was as much as two feet deep and they were several hours on their way. When they arrived, it was so late at night that the fires were all out and the servants long in bed.

It wasn't much of a homecoming for the bride. But for Tom Jefferson the months that followed were the happiest in his life. With Martha he started laying out plans for his garden and supervised the building that was still going on. The two went to Williamsburg where Tom had cases to attend to, besides sessions of the House of Burgesses. Their first child, a daughter, was born on September 27, 1772. Jefferson believed that he had at last achieved what he had wished for all his life—a good home, peace and a family. But over the mountains to the north, storm clouds were gathering which would separate Thomas Jefferson and his wife and deny him the family life for which he longed for many years.

The Stamp Act riots were followed by a refusal of the American colonies to buy any goods, other than the greatest necessities, from England. The result was widespread unemployment in England; many merchants engaged in the American trade went bankrupt. To conciliate the colonies, the Stamp Act was repealed. But before it was repealed, Parliament passed another measure—the Declaratory Act. This asserted the right of Parliament to tax the people of the American (and other) colonies. The repeal of the Stamp Act was celebrated with bonfires and firework displays in all the thirteen colonies. Tom Jefferson and Martha attended a big ball in Williamsburg given to mark the repeal. But, talking matters over later with his friends Dabney Carr, John Page and Patrick Henry, Tom was disturbed about the Declaratory Act, which boldly asserted the right of the British Parliament to tax the people of the colonies.

"We dance and have our bonfires," he said, "but the problem is not solved. In fact, it is made worse. There might have been some doubt of Britain's right to tax us before. Now that doubt is set aside by the Declaratory Act. By this act we have thrust upon us what we cannot accept—taxation without representation."

Governor Francis Fauquier had died in 1768, and was now replaced by a new Governor, Norbone Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt. He was a large man, member of an ancient Norman-English family. Some of his kinsmen had settled in Virginia, so he had some blood ties with the colony. He was well received in Virginia, where the people thought they would be able to get along with him quite as well as they had with Fauquier. He summoned the Burgesses to a meeting at the Governor's mansion, and Tom Jefferson, newly sworn in as a member of the House, listened to his speech delivered in a slow voice with many pauses. Some of the things the Governor had to say hinted at trouble.

Clad in a handsome red coat interworked with gold thread, and white breeches and stockings, the Governor looked the Burgesses over and said, "I have nothing to ask but that you consider well, and follow exactly, without passion or prejudice, the real interests of those you have the honor to represent. They are most certainly consistent with the prosperity of Great Britain, and so they will forever be found when pursued with temper and moderation."

When after paying its respects to the new Governor the House met to consider its business, it was soon found that the interests of the people did not consist in submitting to being taxed by Britain's Parliament. Patrick Henry's famous resolves became immediately part of the business of the House. Tom Jefferson was appointed to a Committee of Propositions and Grievances, and that committee had soon drawn up a number of resolves which were to shake the complacency and bland sentiments of Governor Botetourt.

The first resolution expressed the opinion that the "sole right of imposing taxes on the inhabitants of this, His Majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia, is now, and ever has been, legally and constitutionally vested in the House of Burgesses. . . ."

The second asserted the right of the people of Virginia to petition the King directly for redress of their grievances.

The third denied the right of Britain to demand that Virginians accused of treason be taken to England and tried in English courts.

These resolutions were passed by the full House of Burgesses and copies were sent to the legislatures of the other colonies. The effect could have been anticipated. Governor Botetourt summoned the Burgesses to his mansion and said solemnly in that slow voice of his, "Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses, I have heard of your resolves and augur ill of their effect. You have made it my duty to dissolve you; and you are dissolved accordingly."

The effect of being dissolved was that the business of the colony's government could not be carried on. There was a hurried discussion. The Burgesses agreed that they would meet in the house of Mr. Anthony Hay, who was one of their number, and go on with their proceedings there. The members of the House of Burgesses formed themselves into an association or shadow government for the colony, and decided to ban the importation from England of any article on which a tax had to be paid. The list of articles thus banned included meat, wines, liquor, paper, clothing and leather. George Washington presented this resolve to the members of the association. It was adopted unanimously.

But still no one had any thought of disloyalty to the King. All

believed that in defending their own rights they were defending the rights of Englishmen as well. When their meeting broke up they drank toasts to King George, to the Queen and to Governor Botetourt who, in dissolving them, had merely done his duty. They later invited him to a big ball and treated him with every courtesy. But while the fiddlers played and the ladies and gentlemen, led by the Governor, danced their minuets under the glittering chandeliers, the Governor noted that the guests were no longer clad in the rich clothes of English merchants. They were wearing dresses and suits made of Virginia homespun. In the splendor of the ballroom the contest between King and colonies was being politely but firmly waged.

The decision not to buy English goods on which Britain levied any tax was taken not only in Virginia but in most of the other colonies as well. It resulted in the colonists' having to produce themselves many of the articles they had previously imported. Jefferson was delighted, for here was a direct challenge to his ingenuity. He began immediately the planting of grapevines, importing cuttings from Europe, which he gave to his friends. It might be possible, he thought, to produce a Virginia wine which would be a substitute for the Madeira, widely consumed among the gentry, which had to be imported from English merchants on British ships.

He also obtained a large quantity of clover seed to improve his pastures. Good grass would be important now that salted beef was not to be had from England. He encouraged his neighbors not to kill any lambs but to allow them to grow to sheep, for there would be a great need of wool in the colonies in the months and years ahead. He had become increasingly concerned that Virginia was a one-crop colony. If tobacco prices went down, then Virginia's whole economy would be wrecked. He wanted to see a variety of crops in the colony, particularly since the old tobacco lands were beginning to yield poorer and poorer harvests as the soil was leached of nourishment. He experimented with alfalfa and gave some seed to George Washington to plant on his estate at Mount Vernon. However, the plant, excellent for hay, did not flourish in the acid Virginia soil.

The decision not to import English goods on which a tax had to be paid was taken in the spring of 1769. Its effect in England

was immediate. English merchants, who made millions of pounds a year out of trade with America, found their profits wiped out. They began to clamor to Parliament to lift the tax on the articles exported to America. Parliament was forced to oblige. In November of 1769 Governor Botetourt summoned the House of Burgesses into session. He was in a good mood, for he had excellent news for the colonists. He assured them that the government had no intention whatever of laying any further taxes on the colonies, and that at the next session of Parliament the taxes on paper, glass and paint would be removed.

"They're coming to their senses," said Dabney Carr. "We have struck them where it hurts—in the purse."

Jefferson shook his head. "There's still the Declaratory Act, Dabney," he said. "That act gives the Parliament of Britain the power to tax us any time it wishes. Until that is removed we are utterly at their mercy."

"But, Tom," said Dabney, "if, after all, they remove taxes against which we protest, what is there to worry about? They propose a tax, we object strenuously; we gain our point. Surely, that is the way things should work."

"Dabney," said Tom seriously, "we commit a grave error if we neglect principles and are misled by particular cases. Always search for the principle. The principle is that we should not be taxed without direct representation in the British Parliament. Until that principle is firmly established and acknowledged, we are at the mercy of any ministry that comes into power in England."

There now began to be formed in the House of Burgesses a party of the younger members, led by Patrick Henry and including Tom Jefferson, Dabney Carr, Richard Henry Lee and Francis L. Lee. They were the active, thrusting members, bold in their opposition to arbitrary British rule. The older members—Peyton Randolph, Colonel Bland and George Wythe—also opposed the arbitrary rule of Britain. But they believed that the best way to obtain their ends was by giving no unneeded offense to Britain. They were all for form and etiquette and polite protest, delivered through established channels. Basically, nothing divided these two parties. They were divided only on method—the one advocating a bold stand, the other a more gentlemanly approach.

Richard Henry Lee was a man Tom Jefferson greatly respected. In his first speech to the House of Burgesses, as a new member eleven years previously, he had spoken strongly against slavery, and proposed that it be abolished gradually, a first step being a heavy tax on the importation of new slaves into the colony. He was hopelessly defeated. Tom Jefferson was haunted by the continuance of the slave trade. He never got over the pathetic questions of the slaves asking to whom they belonged when his father died. He never forgot the case of Howland, condemned to slavery for the deeds of his great-grandmother. At the first meeting of the House of Burgesses, before it was dissolved, Tom worked on a bill to improve the condition of slaves. The bill was voted down.

"I tremble for the fate of my country when I reflect that God is just," Jefferson cried bitterly when he found all his efforts to help the slaves defeated. As the law stood in Virginia at that time, a county court could order a slave to be hacked to pieces if he persisted in going about in the night or running away. Jefferson could not even get this terrible punishment taken off the statute books.

10

For the next two years, though the Declaratory Act was not repealed, the political crisis in the colonies dwindled. The British government, rebuffed by the Stamp Act riots and injured by the refusal of Americans to buy any goods on which a tax had to be paid, decided to do nothing for a while. Many but not all of the taxes were rescinded; Americans started importing again, and although a tax remained on tea (which was drunk in the American colonies in copious amounts), few Americans bought any tea but what was smuggled in by the Dutch.

Tom Jefferson continued with his law practice, which was building up very rapidly. He sent to England an order for a dozen or more books on the theory of government, for as a member of

the House of Burgesses his interest in government was keenly aroused. He worked on the building of Monticello, making detailed notes of how much earth a man could carry in a two-wheel barrow as opposed to a one-wheel barrow. He became an efficiency engineer before the term had ever been thought of.

Tom's plans for Monticello were the talk of Virginia. No such private building had ever been erected. It contained many novelties, among them a compass on the roof of Jefferson's study with a pointer connected to the weathercock above and outside. Tom didn't always want to go out of doors to see which way the wind was blowing. He kept notes on wind direction and strength and tried to relate these to the weather to be expected. He planned service elevators to save his staff from running up and down stairs with trays, and also a double-faced clock, one face on the outside of the house so that the one clock told time for those inside Monticello and those out in the garden and fields around. He was always inventing something to cut down work or promote convenience.

His fame as an architect was such that the new Governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, asked him to draw up a plan for an addition to the College of William and Mary, which he did.

Virginia was not as fortunate in Lord Dunmore as it had been in Fauquier and the Baron of Botetourt. Lord Botetourt had died in 1770, and was succeeded by Lord Dunmore in 1771, William Nelson of Yorktown acting as Governor in the interim. Dunmore had been Governor of New York before coming to Virginia, and some ugly stories about him reached the colony. One night a number of drunken rioters attacked the coach of the Chief Justice in the streets. The coach was wrecked and the tails cut off the horses. The Chief Justice offered a reward of two hundred pounds for the capture of his assailants. All New York laughed at the affair. It was an open secret that Dunmore himself had led the gang that attacked the coach.

He was a small man, but strong and healthy, with a quick temper and uncertain manners. He was not likely to suit the elegant Virginians who, though they opposed Botetourt politically, admired him enough to erect a statue to him after his death. Lord Dunmore was almost a year and a half in the colony before he summoned the House of Burgesses into session. They were

summoned when it was discovered that several clever forgeries had been foisted on the colonial treasurer and the credit of the colony was shaken. They were, Dunmore said, to discuss this matter. But the Virginians, with Jefferson to the fore, had something else to discuss—a development which had not taken place in Virginia, but far away to the north in Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island.

Strongly opposed to import taxes and artificially raised prices, the merchants of New England had turned to smuggling, which had become a respectable and indeed a patriotic trade. Britain had many years earlier passed a series of navigation acts demanding that all goods bound for sale in the American colonies were to be carried in British ships. This restriction on their supplies didn't sit at all well with the New Englanders. They took to smuggling goods ashore from foreign ships, or sending ships of their own to foreign ports—particularly the French and Dutch West Indies—to bring back goods which were landed without payment of duties.

Tea was smuggled into the colonies in huge quantities and the customs officials could do little to stop the trade. Men of such eminence as John Hancock were known to be deeply engaged in the smuggling business. But they did not think of themselves as smugglers, but as free traders, performing a very necessary service in the interests of their countrymen—and to their own profit.

Britain still needed to raise money in America but had found that taxation brought nothing but trouble. It was decided then to clamp down on smuggling. If the smugglers could be stamped out there would be a great increase in the revenue obtained through customs. Admiralty courts were appointed to try anyone arrested for smuggling. Trials were conducted by naval officers, without a jury. Sentence often resulted in the confiscation of all property owned by the defendant. Side by side with this, revenue cutters and schooners staffed by British naval officers started prowling the New England coasts looking for smugglers and their secret warehouses. Among these naval officers was Lieutenant Dudlington of the schooner *Gaspee*.

Dudlington was a real fire-eater—a "blind-your-eyes" naval officer of the worst type. He was merciless in boarding and

impounding fishing vessels on charges of smuggling. He also raided farms and stole sheep and cut down fruit trees. He was indeed so heartily hated that there was talk of fitting out an armed vessel to blow him and the *Gaspee* out of the water.

As matters turned out, that was not necessary. While chasing a smuggler up Narragansett Bay, the *Gaspee* ran aground on a sand bank—enticed over the bank by the smuggler, who knew the local waters well. There the vessel lay waiting for a tide to float it off. At midnight a group of American seamen and fishermen from Providence, who had had enough of Lieutenant Dudlington, set out in boats, boarded the *Gaspee,* seriously wounded Dudlington and burned his schooner to the waterline.

An attack had been made on a vessel of the Royal Navy and Britain could not ignore it. A special court of inquiry was established in Providence with power to send anyone suspected of taking part in the burning of the *Gaspee* to England for trial.

This was the news that troubled Jefferson, Henry, Peyton Randolph, George Wythe and others as they gathered in Williamsburg to attend the session of the House of Burgesses summoned by Governor Dunmore. Taking Americans to England for trial was without precedent in the history of the colonies. A gross violation of constitutional right was involved, for basic law gave every man the right to a trial before his peers—by which was meant his equals, those who shared his way of living. An American could not expect to find his peers in England. Furthermore, he would be put to the impossible expense of paying the travel of witnesses from America to London to testify on his behalf. And English courts would not be well disposed to an American "smuggler."

The older members of the House of Burgesses shared Tom Jefferson's view that the whole procedure was illegal and tyrannical. But, as always, they were inclined to make whatever protest was called for with caution and politeness, so as not to offend the London government further. That, however, did not suit Tom Jefferson. The issue was critical and the time for courtesy in protecting the basic rights of Americans was long past. He canvassed Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Francis L. Lee and Dabney Carr. They agreed that a direct and positive action must be taken, and met in a private room of the Raleigh

Tavern to talk the matter over. The meeting lasted a long time. In public Patrick Henry was a great orator, but he indulged in no oratory in these small gatherings, bringing his shrewd mind efficiently to work. He had the least legal training of all the men present. But he had the gift of getting immediately to the crux of any situation.

"What is threatened in Rhode Island," he said, "is threatened in every one of the thirteen colonies. We get assurances that Rhode Island is a special case, and that the same thing would not happen here in Virginia. But it will happen here if the King or his ministers wish it to happen. So we must take the view that anything of this sort that happens in any other colony is the immediate business of Virginia."

"That is why we are meeting here," said Jefferson quietly. "We are Virginians, discussing Rhode Island business because it is our business also."

"The big trouble is that we only learn what has happened weeks later and we get only one side of the story—the government's side," said Dabney Carr. "Everything we learn officially we learn through a newspaper which can be suspended by the Governor. If the newspaper gave any other point of view, it would be closed down and the printer would lose his business."

"It should be possible to start another newspaper, without any connection with the government," said Richard Henry Lee.

Jefferson shook his head. "The Governor of any colony can close down a newspaper any time he wants," he said. "He has the right. And he will use it. Some other method of keeping in touch with what is happening in our neighboring colonies is needed."

The discussion went on, and out of it came a decision to appoint a Committee of Correspondence, whose job it would be to obtain accurate news of any happenings in the neighboring colonies or in Britain affecting Americans. A resolution to establish such a committee was drawn up. The resolution also instructed the Committee of Correspondence to inquire into affairs in Rhode Island and find out on what authority a special court in Rhode Island was appointed with power to transport Americans accused of offenses for trial "in places beyond the seas."

When this was agreed, there came the matter of getting the assent of the older members of the House of Burgesses to the

resolution. It was proposed that some of them should be appointed to the Committee of Correspondence, which would give them a share in its work and control of its activities. And it was further proposed that the resolution should be so framed that it would appear to be a move to maintain order in the colony and prevent wild and inflammatory rumors going about. Then the meeting broke up. But as Thomas Jefferson left the Raleigh Tavern that night he recalled his conversation of many years before with George Wythe. Wythe had said that there were two sources of government in society—the tavern and the official legislature, and that the tavern was often the superior body. It seemed that what wise George Wythe had said was likely to prove true. The little meeting in the Raleigh Tavern might prove more important than any meeting in the House of Burgesses.

The next day at the meeting of the House of Burgesses a number of minor matters were brought up for attention. An addition was voted to the house of the public jailer. Some new ferries across the river were agreed upon. The hours went by, filled with the essential trivia of colonial government. Then, when local matters had been settled, the Burgesses turned to consider the state of the colony as a whole.

Dabney Carr, having obtained the consent of the Speaker, rose to address the House. The older members looked at him tolerantly. He was to make his maiden speech. They remembered how nervous they had felt when they had first risen to address the House, and smiled encouragement to him. The matter would hardly be an important one, though they had heard rumors of a meeting of the younger members at the Raleigh the night before.

In a firm, well-modulated voice, without a trace of nervousness, Carr began his preliminary remarks. It was the duty of all, he said, to uphold the King's peace, to put down rumors and wild reports which inflamed people against the government on false grounds. These were days when many things were happening, and the need for accurate news of these events, particularly when they affected the people of Virginia, was therefore critical. To achieve this end, with which he was sure no member of the House could take issue, he wished to offer a number of resolutions.

He then moved the resolutions concerning a Committee of

Correspondence agreed upon the night before. These resolutions had been carefully worded, largely through the skill of Jefferson, in such a manner that to object to them would appear to be on the side of disorder. The resolutions passed the House without a single dissenting vote. The Committee of Correspondence was formed, and named to it were Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the House; the grave Robert Carter Nicholas, an eminent and greatly respected clergyman; Richard Bland, who was a great authority on law; and together with these older members, Patrick Henry, Dabney Carr, Dudley Digges, an old school friend of Jefferson, and Jefferson himself.

In all, there were eleven members of the committee and any six of them had authority to carry out the committee's business. A letter was sent to the legislatures of the other colonies informing them of the action and suggesting they follow suit. The other colonies very shortly did so. From now on they would not be divided. A net of communication would draw them together. They would not allow themselves to be deceived any further by official propaganda but would establish the facts of any case for themselves.

Governor Dunmore did what was anticipated. He dissolved the House of Burgesses at the earliest possible moment. He could not do this right away, because of the skill with which the resolutions had been worded. But he dismissed the Burgesses eleven days later with the pious recommendation that in future they try to abolish gambling in Virginia and substitute for it "a love of agriculture and attention to . . . private affairs, by which you will render a most essential service. . . ."

Dunmore had made himself unpopular with the Virginians even before his arrival in the colony as Governor. When he was appointed, he delayed several months in New York, implying that he hated to leave the delights of New York and its superior culture for the rural simplicity of Virginia.

He had sent a deputy in his stead, but the Virginians had refused to pay the salary of this deputy and they had made their refusal good. Nonetheless they were gentlemen, and when the Governor did arrive, they extended to Dunmore all the courtesies they had given their previous Governors. They gave balls for him, invited him to hunts, attended him at the Governor's

mansion, and indeed a kind of court circle grew up around Dunmore, the wealthy planters' wives vying for precedence in being seated at the Governor's table. Dunmore used this social rivalry to build what he hoped would be a circle of supporters around him—friends of the Governor and therefore of the King. Virginians were not disloyal to the King at this time. They considered him to be the victim of his ministers, sympathized with him and heartily drank his health. The awakening was to come later.

Lord Dunmore made an especial point of cultivating the most prominent of the Virginians—George Washington. Whenever Washington arrived at Williamsburg he was invited to dine with the Governor. At formal banquets Washington was given the place of highest honor. Dunmore even consulted Washington about a journey through the colony, but Washington was unable to make the tour because of the death of his stepdaughter.

Washington had been among the members who heartily supported the Committee of Correspondence originated by Jefferson and his young friends. Washington was eleven years older than Thomas Jefferson—forty-one at the time the Committee of Correspondence was formed. But in those eleven years lay a tremendous difference between the two. Washington had been old enough to serve in the French and Indian Wars, had been on the staff of General Braddock, had had all the Virginia troops under his command and led them with great personal courage and brilliance. In all this time, Tom had been just a law student.

Washington was a figure of awe for Tom Jefferson, who called him, as everyone did, Colonel Washington. They had, however, many things in common. They loved riding and horses and were fastidious about their mounts. The two were equally interested in agriculture—Washington wished to improve the productivity of his land at Mount Vernon. They were together in opposing encroachment on their rights as Americans. But here Jefferson, with his legal training and his wide reading of philosophers like Locke and Montesquieu, was more forward. The older man was cool, level-headed, but firm. He stood on a middle ground between the conservatism of the old Tidewater aristocracy and the fiery patriotism of Patrick Henry. He was not much swayed by eloquence, did not speak much in the House of Burgesses, for

he had no ability as an orator. But Tom Jefferson, attending meetings, often watched Washington sitting a head higher than the others around him, silent, grave, attentive, deeply courteous. It seemed to Tom that here was a kind of rock around which the issues of the debate swirled without outward effect; a rock of such strength that when the storm subsided, it alone would dominate the scene, unflinching and unchanged in principle and purpose.

II

THIRTY-FIVE days after he moved the formation of a Committee of Correspondence, Dabney Carr died of fever. Tom was not in Williamsburg when his friend died and rushed back to find that he had already been buried. He remembered how only fifteen years before they had studied Latin and Greek together under the old oak tree. He recalled the mutual pledge they had made, that whoever died first the other would bury him under this oak. And so he had his friend's body disinterred and laid to rest under the oak tree as he had promised.

He looked into Dabney's affairs and found that he had left an estate valued at only a little over £1,000. He had been very happy in his little house with his six children and a minimum of furniture, and wanted nothing more. Whatever spare money he had, he spent on books, for he had over two hundred volumes in his library.

"You are to come and stay with me," Tom told Dabney's widow, his sister Martha. "Bring all the children. They will be my children now. I will not have it any other way." He took his sister and her six children into his house at Monticello, and brought them up at his own expense as if he were their father, so that he was surrounded by their love all his life. He found time to take the older ones for horseback rides and walks in the woods, taught them how to manage a canoe, and scolded them if they were lazy at their lessons.

The death of Dabney Carr gave Tom Jefferson, at the age of thirty, a family of eight children. There was his own infant daughter, his wife's son by her first marriage, and Dabney's six children. He loved to hear their voices in the woods and around the house. When he was studying the children were supposed to be quiet or play away from the area of his study. But sometimes they interrupted him and he would get up from his desk, irritated, to tell them to be quiet. But he could never be really stern with them and he would forget his books for a while and lift them up on his shoulders, the little ones screaming in fear and delight to be raised high off the ground to the tall shoulders of Tom Jefferson.

Jefferson spent the next several months after the death of Dabney Carr at Monticello with his greatly enlarged family. He was there through the autumn and winter of 1773–1774, and kept in touch through the Committee of Correspondence and the visits of his friends with what was happening in the other colonies and in England.

He did a great deal of work supervising the building of his mansion, still under construction, and laying out the gardens around. And he spent many hours a day also in reading. He had read widely in law and in the classics in his youth. He read now in history and in theories of government. The tomes he delved in were dull for others; for the questing mind of Tom Jefferson they were vital and full of interest. He read Kames' *Historical Law Tracts and History of Property*, Dalrymple's *Essay Towards a General History of Feudal Property in Great Britain*, and Wilson's *Considerations of the Nature and Extent of the Legislative Authority of the British Parliament.*

When he came upon a passage that particularly appealed to him, he copied it out in his Commonplace Book. One of the extracts he made became a key principle in his thinking. It was from Kames' *History of Property* and read:

> *The perfection of human society consists in that just degree of union among the individuals, which to each reserves freedom and independency as far as is consistent with peace and order. The bonds of society where every man shall be bound to dedicate the whole of his industry to the*

common interest would be of the strictest kind, but it would be unnatural and uncomfortable because destructive of liberty and independency.

The wording is old-fashioned and obscures the meaning today. But the sense remains unshaken. Good government reserves the greatest possible amount of freedom to individuals. A government that demands that all that men produce be dedicated to the state (as for instance communism) is unnatural because it destroys individual liberty.

When Tom Jefferson made this entry in his Commonplace Book he was not thinking of communism, however. He was thinking of Britain's restraint on the trade of the American colonies for the benefit of England; on the many taxes Americans had to pay, again for the benefit of England; and on the power to tax Americans without representation which the British Parliament had asserted. It seemed to him that too much of the American effort went to support the English government. Liberty and independence were threatened. He determined to challenge that threat and challenge it boldly.

While he was studying his books and formulating his ideas, an event occurred in Boston which brought the whole crisis to a head. The East India Company of Britain was in a ruinous state. One of its principal commodities was tea, but thousands of chests of tea remained unsold in the London warehouses because the price was too high. Americans were tremendous tea drinkers—so much so that travelers remarked that many American women would sooner give up their dinners than miss a "dish of tea." But they got their tea cheaply from merchants who obtained it from the Dutch smugglers. The East India Company could not compete with the price of smuggled tea and all attempts to stop the smuggling failed.

To save the East India Company from ruin, the British government decided that its surplus tea should be exported to America and sold so cheaply there that even the smugglers could not compete with the price. It would sell at ten shillings a pound instead of twenty shillings a pound, a price so cheap as to be unheard of. There was a catch, however. Three pennies of the ten shillings a pound that the Americans would be paying for

their bargain tea would be a tax. In buying the tea they would be admitting the right of Britain to tax them. Lord North, the British Prime Minister, was quite sure, however, that Americans would put price before principle—their appetite for tea was such that they would buy up the cheap tea quickly, ignoring the tiny tax.

The tea ships sailed to New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and Boston. But nobody bid on their cargoes. Lord North was wrong—Americans were not going to pay a tax, even on bargain-price tea. Not a single chest of tea was bought by an American merchant. Worse, in Boston, a band of patriots dressed as Indians (some merely threw a blanket over their shoulders and wiped a little soot on their faces) boarded the tea ships and emptied all the tea chests into the harbor.

The gesture was one of defiance and the use of an Indian disguise one of sarcasm. When Britain had first proposed to tax the colonies under the Stamp Act, it was asserted that the money was needed to protect them from the threat of the French and the Indians. There hadn't been a warlike Indian in Massachusetts in many years. So the Bostonians produced some warlike "Indians" as a jibe at the pretensions of the British government.

Other "tea parties" followed. New York and New Jersey "braves" flung chests of tea into the sea. Tea drinking became such a sign of treason to the American cause that not a dish of tea was to be had in any house in America. Americans turned from tea drinking to coffee drinking, becoming and remaining the world's greatest coffee drinkers.

The reaction in England was swift and angry. Demands came from all sides that the "rebels" be punished—and terribly punished. But the British government, having found it had made a mistake in taxing all the colonies, thus uniting them, decided not to make that union firmer by punishing all the colonies. In fact they wouldn't punish any colony. They would punish instead a single town.

Tom Jefferson, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee—all the prominent Virginians—heard of the Boston Tea Party through the Committee of Correspondence shortly after it occurred, December 16, 1773. When they gathered the following spring to meet in the House of Burgesses in Williams-

burg, they wondered what action, if any, Britain would take. Meantime they went on with the business of the government of Virginia. Then, in the midst of their orderly deliberations, a messenger arrived at the door and a sealed paper was hurriedly passed to the Speaker, Peyton Randolph. The debate stopped. All eyes turned to Randolph. He asked permission to interrupt the business of the House and broke the seal. His face went white as he read the paper.

"Gentlemen," he cried, "By act of Parliament, the Port of Boston in the Colony of Massachusetts is to be utterly closed; the closure to go into effect on June 1."

All were horrified by Britain's brutality in declaring economic war on a single American town. The business of the House of Burgesses was immediately suspended while the import of this news was considered. But after the first reaction there was the usual division over whether to lodge a courteous but firm protest or make an outright denunciation in strong terms of Britain's act.

Some argued that Boston was run by mobs anyway—it was a town of turmoil. What happened in Boston was to some degree the fault of the people of Boston—their eagerness to resort to riot against any measure with which they did not agree. What had happened to Boston would not necessarily happen to Williamsburg or any other town of the colonies.

But Patrick Henry saw in the vengeance on Boston a threat to all the colonies. Virginians should feel about Boston, he said, exactly the same sense of outrage as if the James River had been blocked off and no tobacco allowed to be shipped down it for the English market. George Washington agreed with Patrick Henry. The question was, he said, whether Americans should "supinely sit and see one province after another fall a prey to despotism."

Despotism? It was a strong word for so level-headed a man as Washington to use. It made the more conservative members think again.

Jefferson knew that there was danger in this division between young and old members. They must be brought together. A protest must be made on behalf of Boston, and it must be a protest which would be dramatic and yet have the full support of the whole House of Burgesses.

It was up to the younger members to take the lead, but in doing so not to leave the older members behind. Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Francis L. Lee and several others met in the council room of the House of Burgesses where they had a whole library of lawbooks at their disposal. Jefferson was now the strategist, the man who had to unite the fire of Henry with the conservatism of the older members in an effective protest. The plan he proposed was brilliant. The whole of Virginia, he urged, should unite in a day of solemn mourning, prayer and fasting on June 1 when the port of Boston was closed. No business should be transacted; special religious services should be held and sermons preached in every hamlet; and people should appear in mourning clothing. The object of the day should be to "implore Heaven to avert from us the evils of civil war, to inspire us with firmness in the support of our rights, and to turn the hearts of the King and Parliament to moderation and justice."

A resolution to this effect was agreed upon and drawn up, and to give it greater emphasis it was proposed that the grave Robert Carter Nicholas, a man revered for his religious feeling throughout Virginia, should move the resolution before the whole of the House of Burgesses. Coming from Mr. Nicholas, none would vote against it.

The resolution was moved. On the 1st of June, the day of fasting and prayer was observed. Its effect was tremendous. Everyone knew the reason for the observance of this day. Everyone, in doing so, placed himself solidly in support of the people of Boston. And everyone, hearing the proclamation read from pulpit after pulpit, with its reference to the "evils of civil war," was made aware of how grave were the issues which suddenly loomed before Americans.

Lord Dunmore, of course, had to take action. As soon as the House of Burgesses had passed the resolution calling for the day of prayer, he summoned the Burgesses to the Governor's mansion.

"Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses," he said, "I have in my hand a paper published by order of your House, conceived in such terms as reflect highly upon His Majesty and the Parliament of Great Britain, which makes it necessary for me to dissolve you and you are dissolved accordingly." When he had done, he glanced for a moment at George

Washington. Washington had been Dunmore's guest at dinner only a few days previously. But Washington had heartily subscribed to the resolution which made it necessary for the Governor to dissolve the House of Burgesses. They stared at each other coldly, and then Washington, with a perfunctory bow, turned his back and trooped out of the Governor's mansion with the rest of the members.

The Virginians were not finished with their business, however. They retired to what was becoming their other house of legislature—the Raleigh Tavern. There they agreed without a dissenting vote that an attack on any colony would be regarded as an attack on all.

They decided to write to the Committees of Correspondence in the other colonies proposing that delegates be sent to a meeting in some central city to discuss the state of all the colonies and decide on a united policy. What they were suggesting was an unofficial government which would direct American policies in future disputes with King and Parliament—a government of all the colonies. The meetings of the delegates of this elected but unofficial government were to be called a Congress. It was a first step toward independence, but even those who drew up the resolution were unaware of this. What resulted was the first meeting of the Continental Congress, held in Philadelphia in September 1774, the body that was to become the Congress of the United States of America.

Events were moving fast and toward a crisis. But the size of that crisis and the swiftness of that movement were still unsuspected. Tom Jefferson returned to Monticello deep in thought.

12

BACK at Monticello, Jefferson decided to put on paper his thoughts on the position of the American colonists. Just what authority had the British Parliament to govern them? Just what authority had the King of England over the colonists in America? If he had any authority at all, how had the King come to have

that authority? Who had given it to him? Had the people given it to him? Was it part of his right as King? Or was it something he had assumed for himself?

These were the questions that went through Tom Jefferson's mind as he sat alone in his study night after night in Monticello. To answer them he went back into English history, to the original settlement of England by the Angles and Saxons.

These people, under their leaders, had come from the deep dark forests of Germany and made themselves a new home in England. They had immediately started to rule themselves, throwing off the rule of their old chieftains who remained in Germany. The American colonists, Jefferson argued, were in exactly the same position. Their forefathers had left their homeland, England, and settled in a new country. They were no more under the authority of the English King than the old Saxon and Angle immigrants in England were under the rule of the chieftains they had left in Germany.

Jefferson turned to another aspect of the matter. The King of England had for many years been acknowledged as King of the British-Americans in the thirteen colonies. That could not be disputed. But the King of England was also the King of Hanover, which was his ancestral domain. Yet the laws of England did not apply to Hanover, nor did the laws of Hanover apply to England. The same should be true for America. The British Parliament should not have the right to legislate for Americans any more than an American Parliament should have the right to legislate for Englishmen. They might share a king in common, but that was all.

Jefferson put these thoughts down on paper in a statement soon to be known as "A Summary View of the Rights of British America." Some of the sentences foreshadowed a greater document yet to come.

"Single acts of tyranny," Jefferson wrote, "may be ascribed to the accidental opinion of the day; but a series of oppressions begun at a distinguished period and pursued unalterably through every change of ministers, too plainly prove a deliberate and systematical plan of reducing us to slavery. . . .

"Can any one reason be assigned why 160,000 electors in the island of Great Britain should give law to four millions in the States of America, every individual of whom is equal to every

individual of them in virtue, in understanding, and in bodily strength . . . ?

"Let those flatter who fear . . . it is not an American art. . . . They know . . . that kings are the servants, not the proprietors of the people."

So Jefferson's document went. And he concluded it with words of warning: "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time: the hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them. That, sire, is our last, our determined resolution."

When his document was written, Tom Jefferson made two copies of it and set out for a convention which had been called in Williamsburg to elect members to the first Continental Congress, among other things. He was determined to present the document to the members of the convention as a guide for themselves and for whatever delegates they sent to the Congress in Philadelphia. But Tom didn't get to Williamsburg. On the journey he was stricken with an attack of dysentery and had to return to Monticello. He sent his two copies on to Williamsburg, one to Patrick Henry and one to Peyton Randolph.

Henry probably never read his copy. He was, as Tom Jefferson remarked of him, the laziest man in the world when it came to reading. He was always going to read something but never got around to it. But Peyton Randolph read the document at a meeting of the convention delegates in his house—a packed, tense meeting of men who knew they had arrived at a crossroads and feared that one step in the wrong direction might bring them to ruin. The younger delegates cheered the document. The older members agreed with it—but drew back. It was too hasty, too offensive to the King; "too bold," as one delegate put it, "for the present state of things."

The convention adopted a much milder set of instructions for their delegates to the Philadelphia Congress. But Tom's friends had his "Summary View of the Rights of British America" printed in Williamsburg, and it was not long before copies reached London. One came into the hands of Edmund Burke, an outspoken Irish member who had frequently criticized the King's policy. Recently elected to represent the great English port of Bristol, Burke used Tom Jefferson's document as a club to beat the ministers with on their attitude to Americans.

Nobody in England had heard of Thomas Jefferson before.

Who was this Virginia upstart who dared address the King in such terms? they wondered. Well, they would teach him a lesson, and Jefferson's name was put on a bill by which he, with other American patriots, was to be stripped of all his lands. The bill, however, was never passed by the Parliament.

While the first Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, Jefferson remained at Monticello recovering from his illness and supervising the work on his house. He knew how to be patient and how, in times of anxiety, it was best just to go ahead with routine work that had to be done. In Philadelphia the delegates met and Patrick Henry found a tendency among them to think of themselves as New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians and Carolinians. He determined to change that attitude. The British army and the British fleet threatened them all, he said, without reference to their boundaries. "The distinction between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers and New Englanders is no more," he cried. "I am not a Virginian, but an American."

An American? People had thought of themselves previously as British Americans. But Henry had used no adjective. He was a plain American, a member of a new people in a new land with the right to govern themselves. They cheered his speech and some of the barriers between the delegates began to dissolve. And yet the members were not ready for the terrible step that seemed to lie ahead of them wherever they turned—separation from the mother country and her King. They recoiled from it. Britain had been the mother country for well over a century. Were they really to turn their backs upon her and go a separate way? The thought was too dreadful to entertain.

George Washington, who was among the Virginia delegates, made no speeches but listened closely to all that was said. When the Congress adjourned he wrote a friend, "I am well satisfied that no such thing as independence is desired by any thinking man in all North America; on the contrary . . . it is the ardent wish of the warmest advocates of liberty that peace and tranquility on constitutional grounds be restored and the horrors of civil war prevented."

When the first Continental Congress broke up, a declaration of the rights of Americans had been agreed upon, and the old weapon of economic war again produced. It was agreed that after

December, Americans would not import any goods from Britain and after September of 1775 they would not export any goods to Britain. These measures had been successful in securing the repeal of the Stamp Act. It was expected that they would now result in the reopening of the port of Boston and the removal of other grievances, the chief among them being the taxing of the colonies without granting them representation.

Jefferson, at Monticello, went over all the work of the First Continental Congress, in particular the part referring to the importing of goods from England, and was horrified at what he found. The colonies were not all bound equally by the embargo. They had to conform only to those parts of it to which their deputies had agreed. Instead of being united under the Congress, the colonies were permitted to go their own way. Angrily Jefferson quoted part of the Divine Service to illustrate his view of the works of the First Continental Congress. "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done," he said. But he did not add, "and there is no health in us."

Soon Jefferson was attending another meeting of the Virginia Convention which had replaced the old House of Burgesses. It was held at St. John's Church, Richmond. There was, as there had always been, the same division among the members—the younger ones now pressing for a break with Britain, the older hoping for reconciliation. It was Patrick Henry again who shattered the hopes of the older members. After a wealth of conciliatory speeches and warnings against going too hastily, Henry got to his feet and hurled a bombshell.

A free government could not exist without a militia, he argued. If Virginia was a free government then it ought to have a militia, and he proposed that the colony be immediately put in a state of defense and a committee appointed to make plans for establishing a militia to protect the colony.

Pandemonium broke loose in the church. A militia? What for? Virginia wasn't threatened. America's friends in the British Parliament were active on her behalf. The King showed some signs of relenting in his attitude. Anyway, where would they get stores and arms and generals and soldiers? Where was the money to be obtained to supply all these things?

Richard Henry Lee, John Page and George Mason supported Henry. Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison and Edmund Pendleton opposed him. Then Jefferson rose and, with quiet reasoning and well-chosen argument, supported Henry. People looked at Washington. He was the soldier among them. What were his views? Washington sat listening but did not utter a word. He knew what war was like. He had seen the whitened bones of men lying in the tangled woods of the Ohio Valley. He'd seen heavily wounded men struggling to keep up with an army for days, only to drop to their deaths and be left unburied in the wilderness. War was bloody and bestial. It was the last resort of free men. He held his peace.

But Henry had not finished. He turned to those who advocated more negotiations with Britain, more resolutions and petitions. "We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the throne," he cried. ". . . there is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, we must fight. . . . Gentlemen may cry 'Peace! Peace!' but there is no peace. The war has actually begun. . . . Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? . . . Is life so dear, or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"

He sat down. There was silence in the old church. Liberty or death. Had it come to that? The resolution to raise a Virginia militia passed by only five votes. The people were not yet ready for war.

13

In England the King's ministers sniffed the wind and caught the scent of gunpowder and ruin. Large quantities of gunpowder and arms, it was said, had been got together in the colonies to resist the King's authority in open rebellion. Side by side with this, the American decision not to import further goods from Britain

threatened the ruin of the powerful merchant class in the mother country. Two steps were plainly called for. The gunpowder must be seized. The Americans must be soothed or coaxed out of their decision not to import British goods. The steps were agreed upon, and the Governors of those colonies where gunpowder was suspected to be stored were ordered to seize it.

In Virginia, the haughty, fiery Lord Dunmore moved into action. He had been off in the western frontier of Virginia on that tour on which George Washington was to have accompanied him. It was something more than a tour. It was a campaign of conquest in which, with the aid of frontiersmen, Dunmore had subdued the Indians and concluded a peace with the Shawnee who had been on the warpath. That peace was greatly to benefit Virginia in the years ahead, and Dunmore had conducted himself with courage and wisdom among the Indians. But back in Williamsburg, he seized fifteen barrels of gunpowder belonging to the colonists and transferred them to the man-of-war *Fowey* at anchor twelve miles down the York River. In Massachusetts Governor Gage attempted the same thing, sending his redcoats to Lexington and Concord.

When news reached the people that the gunpowder in Williamsburg had been seized there was a roaring reaction in Virginia. Angry crowds gathered outside the Governor's mansion, flinging stones into the grounds. Marines from the *Fowey* had to be brought to secure the Governor's safety. All over Virginia the militia began to arm. Then, through the Committee of Correspondence, came the report of the battles of Lexington and Concord, and the bloody retreat of the British into their stronghold at Boston.

In the north, the war had already started. Virginians were not going to lag behind the men of Massachusetts. Patrick Henry organized a body of militia in Hanover County and began a march on Williamsburg to demand the return of the confiscated powder. Dunmore heard he was coming—and Dunmore feared Henry. He sent an agent out to meet him with money to pay for the powder, and for the moment the crisis passed.

Tom Jefferson arrived in Williamsburg to find the town in a turmoil, everyone talking of the battles of Lexington and Concord and half the people in hunting shirts and armed with rifles.

Even gentle George Wythe, too old a man to fight, bought himself a hunting shirt and turned from the study of his lawyer's briefs to learning how to charge and prime a musket. But Jefferson carried no rifle and wore no hunting shirt.

"Where are your arms?" his friends asked him.

Jefferson glanced at a quill pen on his desk but said nothing.

Finding the whole of Virginia in arms against him, Governor Dunmore summoned a meeting of the House of Burgesses. He had received instructions from Lord North, the British Prime Minister, to offer conciliatory terms.

"I have called you together," said Governor Dunmore, "to give you an opportunity of taking the alarming state of the colony into your consideration, and providing remedies against the evils which are increasing therein."

There were some grim chuckles at these words. The message was all conciliation, informing the Burgesses that their "well-founded grievances, properly represented, will meet with the attention and regard which are so justly due them," and that, regarding taxation, "no specific sum is demanded of you . . . that your justice and liberality may be left full scope and that your gift, if you should be induced to offer any, may be in the most completest manner, free."

"Properly represented," Patrick Henry grunted to Jefferson. "By thunder, the only time that pack of rascals listens to us is when our grievances are improperly represented—not by sweet petitions but by musket balls."

"We'll have to make a reply," said Jefferson.

"Agreed," said Henry. "And so long as the good Mr. Nicholas hasn't anything to do with it, it will leave Governor Dunmore and the King of England with no doubts about our attitude."

Tom smiled. The elderly, grave Mr. Nicholas was one of the leaders of the conciliatory faction. Firm in his principles of freedom, he still believed freedom would best be served by soft words and phrases. "We'll see," he said.

Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the House of Burgesses, had been attending the meeting of the Second Continental Congress, in session at Philadelphia. The members of the Second Continental Congress knew of the conciliatory offer now being made by Lord North through the various colonial Governors. They knew

of them and thought them contemptuous. But Peyton Randolph was worried that in his absence from Williamsburg, Mr. Nicholas would be given the job of drafting Virginia's reply to the offer. He hurried back to Williamsburg from Philadelphia and sought out Tom Jefferson.

"Tom," he said, "you will have to draft our reply. If Mr. Nicholas handles it, the reply will be too soft. He has spent so many years as a loyal subject of the King that he can never screw himself up to defiance—to a bold demand for our rights."

"How long can you give me?" asked Tom.

"A day. Two at the outside. Our reply must reach the Continental Congress at the earliest moment. It is vital that it should be strong. If it looks as though Virginia is wavering, the effect on the other colonies would be disastrous."

"You will have the reply in two days," said Tom. A committee to draft a reply had been appointed. Tom talked with the members, got their views, and went to his writing desk in his lodgings.

Meanwhile the turmoil in the town had increased. The House of Burgesses had decided to inquire into the Governor's right to seize the barrels of gunpowder. Three men entered the arsenal to see what powder remained. They were wounded by a gun trap Dunmore had placed there. The town was outraged by the wounding of the men and ready for revenge. Armed men gathered around the mansion shouting insults at the Governor. Dunmore lost his nerve and on the night of June 8 fled with his family to the safety of the man-of-war *Fowey*. The Governor's flight ended British rule in Virginia. In fact, British rule had ended in two colonies, though few realized it at the time. Dunmore had sought refuge on a battleship and General Gage, Governor of Massachusetts, was locked up in Boston, though he expected shortly, when he got more soldiers from England, to break out.

Tom Jefferson had his reply to Lord North's conciliatory proposal ready in two days, as promised. The reply was firm, well reasoned and courageous. It said the proposal could not be accepted and listed the reasons:

The British Parliament had no right to meddle with the government of the colonies.

The British government was asking a grant of money while insisting it had the right to levy taxes on the colonies. No grant of money could be made while Britain still insisted on the right to tax Americans without representation.

The British government while asking for a grant was preparing to invade the colonies, having sent ships and men for that purpose, "a style of asking gifts not reconcilable to our freedom . . ."

If the colonies contributed money to the common defense of the British empire, they should be allowed freedom of trade with any country in the world. But Britain still denied the colonies freedom of trade.

In any case, the proposition made to Virginians affected all the colonies. They were united now in a Congress of their own. Virginia was bound in honor and interest to share the fate of her sister colonies and would not desert the union with them. A full reply could then only come from all thirteen colonies.

The final paragraphs were masterly.

We have exhausted every mode of application which our invention could suggest as proper and promising. We have decently remonstrated with Parliament; they have added new injuries to old. We have wearied our King with supplications; he has not deigned to answer us. We have appealed to the native honor and justice of the British nation; their efforts in our favor have hitherto been ineffectual.

The case was clear. There would be no more supplications and no reconciliation until Britain renounced the right to tax her American colonies.

Jefferson and Peyton Randolph obtained the approval of the Virginia convention to this reply, and then Tom set out with a copy of it for Philadelphia to present it to the Congress to which he was an alternate delegate with Peyton Randolph. He traveled by phaeton, a light two-wheeled carriage; but though he was in a hurry, he had time to make notes of the flora and fauna of Maryland, to visit the State House at Annapolis and to buy some books.

In Fredericksburg he bought a horse—a magnificent animal

named General which was to become his favorite. His journey took him a week, for roads were poor and in some places nothing more than a trace. In Philadelphia he took lodgings with a cabinetmaker, Benjamin Randolph, and found himself, with his entry into the city, suddenly on the world stage.

Tremendous events had taken place while Tom Jefferson was on his way to Philadelphia. A whole government had been set up, deriving its powers from the Congress, and with the authority to make war, conclude peace and enter into alliances with other nations. The issuance of three million dollars in paper currency was authorized. Provision was made for the formation of a regular army, for the enlistment of men and the construction of forts.

In a matter of a few weeks the whole character of America was changed and British rule had gone. And yet no formal renunciation of Britain had been made, and many still hung back from it. Men still drank the King's health at dinner and "perdition to the King's enemies." They did not think of themselves as the King's enemies. They were his loyal subjects, demanding rights due to them and which the King himself was unaware had been taken from them by conniving ministers. So the people believed.

A big problem had arisen concerning the New England militiamen who, under the leadership of Artemus Ward, now hemmed in the British garrison and General Gage in Boston. Patrick Henry told Jefferson, when he arrived, what had taken place. "Some delegates were against adopting the New England army," he said. "Others said if it wasn't adopted by the Congress it would dissolve and Gage would come bursting out of Boston and lay waste to the whole countryside. Then there was the question of a general if the Congress decided to adopt the army. Artemus Ward held command. But many members thought John Hancock should be given command. The southern colonies didn't like the idea of a New England army commanded by a New England general.

"John Adams solved the problem. He moved that the Congress officially adopt the Army as the Continental Army and appoint a general. He went further than that. He said that there was one man from Virginia sitting among them whose skill and experience and talents eminently fitted him for the post of General . . ."

"Washington?" asked Tom.

"Right," said Patrick Henry. "Washington was sitting by the door—in the background as usual. You know how he hates to speak in public or look as if he's putting himself forward. As soon as he suspected that Adams was talking about him, his face went scarlet and he sneaked out into the library. I've never seen a man so embarrassed in my life.

"Well, that's the way it went. The army is the Continental Army and Washington is the General—a big tribute to Virginia as well as to him, I might add."

"And a very astute move by Mr. Adams," said Tom. "For now no one can complain. The army may be from New England, but the commander is a southerner—and at the same time the best soldier in all the colonies."

One of the first men Tom Jefferson met in Philadelphia was Dr. Benjamin Franklin, then sixty-nine years of age, and newly returned from London where he had been agent for the colonies, pleading the American cause but without success. They talked of the crucial issue of the break with the King, which seemed to be more and more imminent.

"Sir," said Franklin in his quiet, good-humored voice that still bore traces of a New England accent though he had lived in Philadelphia and London most of his life, "as you know, people have risen against kings before. In England there was the great rebellion against Charles I who was subsequently beheaded. One of the men who signed the papers authorizing the execution of the King made a statement which, I fancy, applies to us now."

"What statement was that?" asked Jefferson.

" 'Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God,' " replied Franklin.

" 'Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God,' " repeated Tom Jefferson. The words seemed to sum up everything in which he believed. Years later when he designed a signet ring for himself, the sentence was incorporated in the design, summarizing his deepest belief.

Jefferson took his seat in the Congress as soon as he arrived, and when he rose to present Virginia's reply to Lord North's proposals, all heads turned to see him. The greatest men in the colonies were present—John Adams and his second cousin Sam Adams; John Hancock; Benjamin Franklin; John Dickinson, the most revered man in Philadelphia; Edward Rutledge of South

Carolina; and George Read of Delaware. These men had all read Tom Jefferson's "A Summary View of the Rights of British America" and agreed with every word. They rose in their seats straining to see the author. Jefferson made a good impression as he stood among them—tall, angular, decently but not foppishly dressed, his face tanned, his voice quiet but firm.

"These Virginians," one delegate said to his neighbor. "They seem to be a special breed."

"From what I hear of Jefferson, he is special even among the Virginians," said the other.

"A fighting man, eh?"

"A lover of liberty," was the reply. "The best horseman in Virginia, I hear. And the best penman too."

After receiving permission from the Speaker, John Hancock, Jefferson read Virginia's reply to Lord North's proposal—calmly, without heroics. The very quietness of his voice lent force to the words. When he was done the delegates cheered. Virginia had given the reply Congress wanted to hear and that Congress itself was about to give on behalf of all the colonies.

But not all were in favor of so bold an answer. Pennsylvania, led by John Dickinson, was not ready for a break, not ready yet for strong frank words demanding American rights.

The southern and northern colonies were ripe for an end to British meddling of any kind in American affairs. The central colonies, led by Dickinson, held that Britain's Parliament had the right to pass laws regulating the trade of the colonies, and, provided taxes levied were for the purpose of controlling trade and not for the purpose of raising revenue, the colonies should submit.

There was also a curious unshakable loyalty toward the person of the King which irritated Jefferson, Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. Yet it was there, this belief that the King did not know how badly his subjects in the American colonies were being treated, that he was totally misled by his ministers.

Ben Franklin did not share this belief. He had spent many years in England, where he had been admired by the people and disliked by the court. He knew that the King's ministers were the tools of the King. But he was wise enough to let others find out for themselves.

Franklin was chosen to head a committee to draft a reply to

Lord North's proposals. And Tom Jefferson, newly arrived in Philadelphia, came next in the number of votes cast for membership in the committee. Hardly had the committee been chosen than a dust-covered rider from New England clattered into Philadelphia on a sweat-lathered horse with the news of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

"We licked the redcoats!" he shouted. "We gave them a drubbing they'll not forget. There was a pitched battle and we'd have beaten them thoroughly if we had not run out of powder."

The whole town was in a furor at the news. The militia paraded through the streets to celebrate. Groups of men, some with and some without leaders, marched off with their muskets to swell the army outside Boston. This was war—real war. There was no room left now for negotiations, and the time for polite petitions, nicely worded to avoid offense, was long past.

Jefferson was appointed to draft the reply to Lord North's proposals and did so. As a model he used the reply which he had written for the Virginia House of Burgesses, and the words came out clean and hot as cannon shot. And yet, despite Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill, the middle colonies, led by Dickinson, insisted that the fire be taken out of the reply—that the ardor be subdued and the phrases be more politely couched.

Tom Jefferson was also given the job, together with John Dickinson of Philadelphia, of drafting an address for Washington to deliver to the army, setting forth the reasons why they had taken up arms. He went at it with vigor, for the reasons were perfectly clear to him. But Dickinson would not agree to so bold a statement and in deference to him the draft was watered down.

"Dear God," cried Jefferson. "How long must we obscure the whole issue in polite phrases when what is wanted is common frankness?"

"Bah," cried John Adams. "That Dickinson has a fiddling kind of genius. He fears to offend with as much as a misplaced comma. But the time for correspondence is long past. The issue will be settled only by musket balls."

"You were never more right in your life, sir," said Patrick Henry.

Having adopted the army, appointed Washington its commander, set rules for the pay and enlistment of men and approved

its reply to Lord North's proposals, the Congress, after a very lengthy session going on into winter, adjourned and Tom Jefferson returned home to Monticello. He was, in all things, a man of reason, slow to anger. But as week after week went by and there was no sign of a relenting in the attitude of Britain, no reply to the message of the Continental Congress to Lord North in London, his blood began to boil. Unlike Patrick Henry, Tom Jefferson rarely spoke his anger. He wrote it. And when his relative, John Randolph, who was pro-British, decided to leave the colonies for England, since he disagreed with the colonial resistance to the King's armies, Tom wrote him a letter. He liked John Randolph and respected him, but, at the risk of shattering their friendship, he stated his mind clearly:

> . . . there is not in the British empire a man who would more cordially love a union with Great Britain than I do. But by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British Parliament propose, and in this I think I speak the sentiments of America. We want neither inducement nor power to declare and assert a separation . . . we must drub him [General Howe, who had now replaced Gage] soundly, before the sceptred tyrant will know we are not mere brutes, to crouch under his hand, and kiss the rod with which he deigns to scourge us.

Jefferson's mind through the spring of 1776 was greatly troubled. Many things were clear. Some things were unclear. It was clear to him that no settlement with Britain was possible without agreement on the principle of no taxation without representation; clear to him that every American had the rights granted freely to every Englishman; clear that the British Parliament had no right to overrule the laws passed by the colonial legislatures. But he had been all his life a British subject: a Virginian, an American—and British. To part with the people whose blood he shared, to part with traditions which were his traditions, to part with that whole body of law which provided more justice for a man in court than was available anywhere else in the world—that was a hard thing to do.

George Washington's estate, Mount Vernon, was named after

an English admiral who had been a friend of Washington's father. Jefferson's old home, Shadwell, had been named after a London parish. There were a thousand thin but strong ties like these that bound him emotionally to Britain. Were they now to be cut and England hereafter to be a foreign and hated nation?

He spent the period until the next and third session of the Continental Congress, as did many other prominent Americans, in an agony of mind—firm in his principles, determined that there should be no surrender of rights, but hoping that somehow, in some way, a settlement would be found.

Meanwhile, outside Boston, the Continental Army huddled in rude huts in the bitter cold, besieging the redcoats. They called the army opposing them not the King's army but the Ministerial army. The King was the protector and father of his people. The officers drank his health every night at dinner, George Washington himself proposing the toast. The King's scheming ministers alone were the enemy.

In Philadelphia, in a cheap lodginghouse, was a man newly arrived from England, who took another view of the King. He called the King not father but tyrant; not protector but "royal brute." Working by the light of a penny candle, he was writing a pamphlet that was to shake all America.

His name was Thomas Paine, and the pamphlet he wrote was titled *Common Sense*.

14

THE year 1776 was ushered in by the bombardment of Norfolk, Virginia, by British ships, the order for the attack being given by Lord Dunmore. The man who only two or three years before had held court in Williamsburg, establishing an order of precedence for the seating of prominent Virginians at his table; who had frequently invited George Washington to dine with him, and had asked Tom Jefferson to draw up plans for improving William and Mary College—this man now broke out his true colors.

He declared Virginia in a state of revolt and placed it under martial law. Then he invited the slaves to join him in a revolt against their masters. Finally he ordered the British ships to open fire on Norfolk, and after a bombardment of three days, the whole town was destroyed with the exception of St. Paul's Church. Previously Dunmore had ordered raids by British sailors along the Virginia coast, so that the war, which had so far been confined to Massachusetts, now flared up in Virginia. Tom Jefferson had news of these events before he left Philadelphia to return to Monticello. He was on his way back when Norfolk was burned to the ground. The whole colony was in a turmoil.

John Page was worried that his plantation in the Tidewater section would be razed. Another friend, Thomas Nelson, begged Jefferson to bring his family from Monticello to Philadelphia, where they would be safe. A major assault by the British under Dunmore up the James River was expected. But for Jefferson Monticello was the dearest place on earth. He would not leave it. He stayed there, and in all the torment of mind in which he was now placed, he went ahead with the building of his lovely mansion, taking care of his numerous family.

All seemed very dark to Tom Jefferson in those days. His kinsman Peyton Randolph had died of apoplexy in October 1775. His wife was in poor health. In March 1776, his mother, living with him at Monticello, died. Jefferson himself, overwrought by public worries and private grief, became ill, suffering from piercing headaches which would give him no peace. To regain some serenity he went walking or riding in the woods around his estate, trying to get from the nature he loved the strength he would need for the terrible days he sensed loomed ahead.

He loved Virginia and would always love it. He was anguished by the brutalities Dunmore was inflicting on the land, but powerless to do anything to prevent them. In these terrible times a new kind of strength developed in him—the strength to endure in silence and patience every kind of hardship. Gentle and reasonable by nature, he developed a rocklike fortitude, so that in the future, misfortune, public or private, might hurt him, but would not conquer him.

Jefferson had hardly returned from Philadelphia when his friend Thomas Nelson sent him a letter.

"I am sending to you a present of two shillings worth of Common Sense," wrote Nelson, enclosing the pamphlet written by Thomas Paine. Jefferson read it at one sitting and his spirits soared.

Here was the clear voice of courage cutting through all the confusion of quibbling doubts and anxious compromise. One man, a corsetmaker, dared to unmask the King on his throne and show him for what he was—a tyrant and a brute, unworthy to rule; a coarse, low, bloody-minded dictator bent upon the enslavement rather than the protection of his people. Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* was like the trumpet call preceding battle. It swept aside the last lingering doubts of Americans in taking up arms against their King; pointed to him as the enemy and charged them to throw off his rule. Others might have secretly harbored the same thoughts about the King, but the shadow of the noose prevented their committing them to paper. Paine spoke out—spoke out hot and sharp, putting aside all fears and pretenses.

Paine denounced George III as a "hardened sullen-tempered Pharaoh" and "the Royal Brute of Great Britain." He demolished the pretense to which Americans still clung—that there was a difference between the King and his ministers and between the King and his Parliament. Ministers and Parliament were the tools of the King, and the King a tyrant. As a tyrant, his rule must be overthrown by force of arms. America must declare itself independent of King, Lords and Commons, and sustain that independence with her blood. That was the only course available to free men.

This was the conclusion to which Jefferson himself had already come, even before Paine published *Common Sense*. Independence, then—independence achieved by sword, musket and cannon—that was the answer. But the independence must be declared. It must be made clear to the world that this was no mere colonial revolt arising out of anger over taxes on sugar and tea. Far larger issues were at stake—issues bearing on the relationship of men to any government they might have over them. The time had come to set down on paper that great charter of natural rights Tom Jefferson had talked about so much with George Wythe—those rights which he believed in the depth of his soul must never be taken from men by any government, any police agency, any court of law.

In May 1776, Tom Jefferson set out for the meeting of the Third Continental Congress in Philadelphia. He was pale from his illness and concerned about his wife who was still not well. Yet on larger matters, his mind was at ease at last, for he knew what was to be done, and knew also that the time had come for doing it.

When he arrived in Philadelphia Tom Jefferson found that others were of the same conviction. Tom Paine's pamphlet had worked a magic on men, settling their last doubts about taking the grave step over which they had previously hesitated.

"What of Washington?" Jefferson asked John Adams when they met in Philadelphia.

"He's tired of artful declarations and pretenses," said Adams. "He asks for open, undisguised, manly terms proclaiming our wrongs and our resolution to be redressed."

"Independence?" Jefferson asked.

Adams nodded. "Independence," he said. "It is a flame. South Carolina and North Carolina are for it. Virginia surely will not lag behind."

Jefferson smiled. He knew Virginia would be in the forefront for independence, and indeed soon had news that the Virginia Convention meeting in Williamsburg had voted to instruct its delegates to the Continental Congress to propose "to declare the United Colonies free and independent States, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence on, the Crown or Parliament of Great Britain."

On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee, delegate to the Congress with Tom Jefferson, rose and presented Virginia's resolution calling for independence. "The resolution of Virginia, sir, is as follows," he said to the Speaker. "Resolved that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be, totally dissolved."

John Adams rose to second the resolution. North and south were united—Virginia and Massachusetts. Suddenly there was an uproar. Shouts of "Liberty!" and "Long live Virginia!" filled the hall. The turmoil lasted several minutes, delegates climbing over chairs to shake the hands of Lee and Adams.

But when the outburst quieted down, it was found that not all the colonies were prepared to support the resolution. Pennsyl-

vania held back and so did New York and Maryland. There was a long debate, lasting until seven that evening and continuing the following day.

Tom Jefferson took no part in the debate. Some hotly supported the resolution of independence; others supported it but said the time was not ripe. Others were opposed to the break with the mother country. Jefferson was not angry. He did not demand that all men share his convictions. He demanded only that they state their reasons for thinking otherwise and was anxious to investigate these reasons with them.

June 8 was a Saturday. The Congress debated through the whole day, and finally decided to postpone the vote on Virginia's resolution calling for independence until July 1. That would give the hesitant delegates time to think the matter over and get in touch with their own people back home. Meanwhile a committee was appointed to draw up a declaration of independence, should the colonies later agree to the break. The committee consisted of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and R. R. Livingston. Francis Hopkinson of New Jersey was added a little later to the committee.

A document may be agreed to by a committee. But it must be written by one man. There was no disagreement over who should write the declaration. The job was assigned to Tom Jefferson. On arrival in Philadelphia, he had taken rooms in a new brick house on the corner of Market and Seventh Streets. The house belonged to a bricklayer named Graff who was newly married. Tom Jefferson's rooms were on the second floor, and consisted of a bedroom and parlor.

He had had a folding writing box made for him and he opened it and put it on a table in the parlor. He had no books with him and no reference sources, for he had no need of them now. What he was about to write had long been in his mind. In the silence of the room, alone, with several blank sheets of paper before him, he paused to collect his thoughts—thoughts of the slaves who had asked him on his father's death to whom they belonged, of Patrick Henry's great cry, "Give me liberty or give me death," of Richard Henry Lee's resolution that the United Colonies ought to be free, of the petitions written to the King's ministers and to the King, and of the men he had seen in Virginia and

Philadelphia marching with firelocks and muskets to join the army in Boston.

The whole panorama unfolded in his mind—the arguments about natural rights, the writings of Locke and Montesquieu and Ferguson. And then the friend who, holding a musket, had asked him why he was unarmed.

Calmly Tom Jefferson reached for a quill pen, took out a pocket knife and trimmed the point. The action was similar to the priming of a musket. He dipped the pen in his inkwell and started to write.

"When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another . . ."

The words came to him readily. Like the explosion of the musket at Lexington shattering the silence of the day, they were to be heard around the world, echoing and re-echoing, never to die—speaking of freedom from tyranny for all men everywhere.

A DAWN IN THE TREES

1776–1789

15

THE TASK of writing took seventeen days. While he was at work, Jefferson begged his friends to leave him alone. He was prepared to discuss business with them, but he did not want any social calls for he hated to be interrupted while he was writing. When it was done, Jefferson took the document first to the two members of the committee he held in the highest esteem, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams.

"Please make whatever alterations you think necessary," he said. "Don't hold back for fear of hurting my feelings. The Declaration is more important than I. It must be sound. It must say exactly what we want, and plainly so that the world will understand why we are taking this position."

Franklin, the Declaration in his hand, peered over the top of his steel-rimmed spectacles at Jefferson. "Do you think that you have put anything into it that is original—that comes entirely from yourself? Some new principle of government which we had not thought of?"

"No," said Jefferson. "I have not attempted anything new but have only stated those principles of freedom recognized as the proper rights of man by all who have thought and written on the subject. I have tried to bring all together in one statement, made clearly and without quibbling, believing, as I know you believe, that truth alone has any lasting value."

"And on slavery?"

"You know my stand on slavery. I abhor it. So do you. I have denounced it. It should be denounced. It should be abolished. How can we establish a nation of free men, ourselves supporting slavery?"

Franklin nodded and seemed for some moments to be in deep

thought. He himself came from poor circumstances and had never owned a slave. Jefferson came of the landed gentlemen of Virginia and owned several hundred. Yet Jefferson was vehemently opposed to slavery and retained his slaves because if he set them free they would starve and if he paid them he would be unable to compete with other slave owners who paid no wages.

"Mr. Jefferson," Franklin said, "we must stand before we can walk; walk before we can run; run before we can ride; ride before we can fly." He considered the prospect of men flying for a moment. The words had come unbidden. Was it possible that men would one day fly, or was he talking nonsense? Perhaps some key to the question lay in the weight of the bones of birds as opposed to the bones of men. He should get the skeleton of a large bird and weigh the bones carefully and equate their weight if the bird were the size of a man. His mind wandered on and Jefferson waited patiently.

"The question of slavery," Jefferson said at length, prompting him.

"Ah yes," said Franklin. "There may be trouble there. Too many interests are involved—north and south. I will support you. But we must not hazard all on this one question alone."

They dined together that night and frequently in the days that followed, but talked little of the Declaration. Jefferson, the task done, seemed to have put it out of his mind since it was no longer in his hands. Actually Franklin, Adams and the other members of the committee made very few changes in the draft Declaration as Jefferson had set it down. Of the members of the committee, John Adams was the most outspoken.

"I will fight for the Declaration until the last dog is hung—and I will hang him myself, sir," he told Jefferson. "The northern colonies are with us. You have nothing to fear from New England. They're as solid as a wall. Virginia, we know, is for independence, and the southern colonies are ripening to the thought. But the middle colonies—there's the trouble. I tell you that fellow Dickinson has made but one firm decision in his life and that was never to make any decisions at all. He has spent his life reducing 'yes' to 'perhaps' and 'no' to 'maybe,' and in that kind of work he has a genius all his own."

John Dickinson was the leader of the Pennsylvania delegation to the Continental Congress and even at this late date clung to the pathetic hope that the colonies could be reconciled to the mother country, England.

"It is my opinion that he will be persuaded to join us," said Jefferson.

"It is my opinion that when the vote is taken, he won't be there," snapped Adams.

So the most important business immediately before the Congress was not Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, but Richard Henry Lee's resolution calling for independence. Once that was passed—if it were passed—then the Declaration itself, which would formalize the decision for the benefit of the world, would be considered.

The debate on the Virginia Resolution calling for independence opened early on July 1, in Carpenters Hall, Philadelphia, where the meetings of the Continental Congress were held. Thomas Jefferson had been up at dawn, as usual, had bathed his feet, as usual, and had recorded the temperature at six in the morning, as usual.

Though he wrote well he was no orator, for his voice in public speaking was high-pitched and his meticulous mind did not allow him the flights of fancy, the appeals to the emotions, the scorn and irony and humor that made Patrick Henry the most famous orator of the day. He had determined not to speak on the Virginia Resolution for other reasons. He was himself a delegate from Virginia. It was plain then that he supported the resolution. Support from colonies other than Virginia was what was needed. Jefferson hoped to get that support from John Adams. He hoped that Adams would second and speak strongly for its adoption. An alliance between Virginia and Massachusetts, which Adams represented, would demonstrate the unity of the colonies to those who were inclined to think, though secretly, that the quarrel with Britain was primarily a quarrel between the New England states and the Crown. That sentiment was not often voiced, but it lay hidden in the private thinking of some of the delegates. After all, what injury had England ever inflicted on Delaware or Maryland or Pennsylvania?

Jefferson was deeply attached to John Adams. He loved the honesty of his mind, his liberality of view, his courage in stating his convictions, his ability to get to the heart of matters and not get bogged down in details.

Adams rose to the occasion. When the Virginia Resolution was submitted to the Congress, it was Adams who seconded the resolution and Adams who beat down all the opposition.

The opposition was formidable and came principally from John Dickinson, leader of the big Pennsylvania delegation. Dickinson was very highly respected. He had so often written of the rights of the colonies in their quarrel with England that he was called the "Penman of the Revolution." To him had often fallen the task of drafting petitions for the redress of the grievances of the colonies addressed to the British Parliament, to the people of England and to the King of England.

His prose was elegant and his appearance was as elegant as his prose. His wig was well powdered and combed. He wore sober dark clothing, usually black, to which his snow white linen presented a fetching contrast. He spoke with fire and conviction against a formal Declaration of Independence and said that he knew that what he was about to say would cost him his reputation. But his conscience demanded that regardless of his reputation, he speak out for what he believed. The decision the Congress faced had never before been taken by Britons or the descendants of Britons—the decision to cut themselves off forever from the land of their fathers, from its laws, its commerce, its government, its traditions and its protection.

Here was a terrible leap to be made into the dark and Dickinson warned eloquently against it. The delegates should not, he said, take so great a step without that step being demanded of them by the people they represented. Such a demand had not come from the people so far. Many of the colonies were not prepared to vote for independence. If some voted for it and others against it, there would be a split among the colonies. The dissenters might secede from the proposed union and nothing but discord would result. Furthermore, while some argued that France and Spain would welcome an American Declaration of Independence and would then give aid to the American cause,

that might not be the case. France might be alarmed at the rise of a new power on the North American continent. Britain might secretly ally herself with France to bring about the ruin of the new American nation. Independence, he warned, could mean only outright war. The colonies were not in any condition to fight so great a power as England and had no allies. "What you ask," he said, "is that we burn down our house in midwinter and have no other house to shelter us."

So the arguments went, presented by Dickinson with great sincerity, and they had a marked effect on the delegates.

He spoke at length, quoting often from his own writings on the subject of independence, and when he had done, nobody rose immediately to reply to him.

A nervous silence settled over the assembly, interrupted only by the buzzing of innumerable horseflies which came from a livery stable next door. The delegates eyed each other, waiting for someone to rise and speak, and soon they were all looking at Tom Jefferson, sitting a head higher than the rest of them. Jefferson did not look up, but continued making notes of what Dickinson had said. Then, when it seemed that no answer was to be given, stocky John Adams rose, his jowl set like a bulldog's, and beat down point by point the whole of Dickinson's objection.

What was all the learned quibbling about? he demanded. The resolution before the Congress would only acknowledge a fact that already existed. They had established their independence by opposing the King's Redcoats and to talk of waiting to hear from the people was nonsense. They had heard from the people in musket shot at Bunker Hill and elsewhere. The King himself had made the colonies independent by declaring them out of his protection and levying war against them. If Pennsylvania and Maryland were holding back, maybe the reason was that they hadn't been attacked by the enemy. . . .

John Adams had a gift for sarcasm and he used it to effect, saying that, as far as Pennsylvania was concerned, it was not a case of the delegates being ahead of the people but the people being ahead of the delegates.

"In Pennsylvania we have seen at times a curious contradiction—nonrepresentative representatives," he said.

The thrust went home, for Pennsylvania had little or no representation for her frontiersmen and small farmers who, a few years previously, had been so angered at their government that they had marched on Philadelphia armed with rifles. All the persuasiveness of Benjamin Franklin had been required to prevent them from entering and perhaps looting the City of Brotherly Love.

When Adams had done, a vote on the Virginia Resolution calling for a break with Britain was taken. Voting for the break were New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. South Carolina and Pennsylvania voted against it. Delaware had only two members present and they were divided. New York abstained from voting until new instructions were received.

Nine of the colonies then were for independence, two were against it and two abstained. At this point Mr. Edward Rutledge of South Carolina requested that the decision be put off to the next day. "At that time," he said, "it is possible that my delegation will vote for the resolution for the sake of unanimity."

"We have wasted the whole day in infernal prattle," said John Adams to Jefferson as they left the hall. "There was not one single word said in the whole of nine hours that had not been said a hundred times before in the past six months."

"The day was not wasted," said Jefferson quietly. "Tomorrow South Carolina, I am persuaded, will vote for the resolution and then we will have ten for and one against. Caesar Rodney is expected at any moment from Delaware. If he is here by tomorrow, that will break the deadlock there. They are caught in a tide, sir, and swim as they will, they cannot resist it."

But John Adams would not be comforted. New England born and bred, he liked matters plainly put and went off grumbling about Philadelphia and lawyers (for Dickinson was, among other things, a lawyer). "Philadelphia lawyers," he snorted in disgust, coining a phrase without being aware of it. He was so angry that after supper he sat up and wrote a letter by candlelight to a friend, complaining that the whole day had been wasted rehashing arguments that had been hackneyed weeks before.

It was perhaps George Washington who unwittingly produced

a unanimous vote for independence when the Congress met again the following day, July 2.

Hardly had the members taken their places when a dispatch rider flung in from Washington's headquarters in New York. He had ridden day and night—and ridden hard—for the news he carried was both grave and urgent. Mr. Benjamin Harrison, temporary president of the Congress, opened the letter the dispatch rider handed to him and read it to the members.

British warships were massing in huge numbers off New York. An attack on the city was imminent, and Washington said that with the small army at his command every exertion would be needed to prevent a major disaster. He needed men, materials and support quickly.

That settled the matter for South Carolina. The colony changed its vote from "No" to "Yes," supporting the resolution for independence. A change had taken place in the voting of the Pennsylvania delegation. John Dickinson was absent. He could not and would not vote for independence. Ben Franklin was present and seated right next to Jefferson. The Pennsylvania delegation changed its vote to one in favor of independence.

The count was now eleven for independence with only Delaware and New York unheard from. During the night, one of lashing rains and thunderstorms, Caesar Rodney of the Delaware delegation had arrived mud-splattered and weary. He had ridden eighty miles to cast his vote and the Delaware delegation, previously divided, now also voted for independence.

Only New York refrained from voting, awaiting fresh instructions. But in the light of the news from Washington, there was no doubt which way New York would vote.

The resolution was passed. There was no turning back now. Independence had been formally voted by the Congress representing the colonies.

"Well, sir," said Franklin, turning to Jefferson after the vote was taken, "we have now only your Declaration ahead of us. May I give you some advice?"

"I would be glad of it," said Jefferson.

"While they are going over your Declaration," said the wise Franklin, "you will suffer less if you think of it as having been written by someone else."

16

THE debate in the Congress on the Declaration of Independence was perhaps the greatest ordeal of Tom Jefferson's public life to that time. The delegates went over his draft word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph. At times they haggled for an hour or more over a single word, while Jefferson writhed in his seat, fighting back his natural inclination to defend the document. But he had determined to say not a word on his own behalf, leaving its defense to John Adams and others of his friends.

Two changes in the Declaration irritated him especially. The first was his charge that the British people shared with the King the responsibility for the ill treatment of the American colonies which had driven them to rebellion. From Jefferson's point of view, the people of Great Britain could, through their elected representatives in the Parliament, have prevented the abuses heaped on Americans by the King and his ministers. They had not done so, but had continually returned to office members of Parliament who had supported the King's abuses in the past. This whole charge against the British people was greatly watered down by the Congress and Jefferson regarded this as contemptible.

Let the facts be plainly stated and the responsibility put where it belonged. That was his point of view. But the Congress felt that there were still many in Britain who sympathized with the American cause, and it would be folly to alienate these with a blanket charge against the whole people of the country.

Jefferson was hardly just in putting so much blame on the British people. Great Britain at this time had a population of about eight million. But so outdated was the election system that eleven thousand voters in key cities elected 257 members of Parliament—more than half the membership of the House of Commons. Prosperous cities such as Manchester and Birmingham

could not elect a single member to Parliament, while hamlets such as Old Sarum, built around a fort erected by the Romans, elected seven. In fact, Old Sarum had more members of Parliament than constituents entitled to vote. In fifty-one constituencies there were less than fifty voters. In some only one man had the right to vote. His single ballot elected a member to Parliament and he sold his vote to the highest bidder. Indeed, while the Declaration of Independence was being debated in Philadelphia, John Wilkes in England was working to reform the whole system of electing a Parliament in England.

But Jefferson did not consider this and he was blind to the impotence of the British people. He had never been to England at this time and could not guess at the corruption of the whole system of government there; he tended to think of Englishmen as having the same vigor and freedom of expression as Americans. He said nothing while his charge against the whole people of Britain was watered down. But he never forgot that change. It rankled him years later, and he described it as pusillanimous.

The second change which angered Jefferson was one which Franklin had warned him to expect. In his charges against King George III, he included the following:

> He [King George III] has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation hither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting these very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.

The language is out of date but the sense still comes strongly through. Jefferson held King George responsible for the continuance of the slave trade. Jefferson had always been horrified by slavery. He could not countenance the selling of human beings like so many animals. He maintained that slavery destroyed the character of the slave owner, who could vent his anger unbridled on a slave whenever he wanted, and could teach his children by example to do the same. It was true that King George had "prostituted his negative," that is, he abused his power of veto to block any legislation to abolish the slave trade or even reduce the terrible punishments to which slaves were subjected for the slightest resistance to bondage.

But King George had many supporters in his stand, a great number of them in the American colonies. The delegates of South Carolina and Georgia would have none of Jefferson's indictment of slavery. Both these colonies were strongly opposed to any attempt to reduce the slave trade, for slaves were widely used on the plantations there. And the northern colonies profited from the slave trade too, for it was they who sent the ships to Africa to obtain slaves, sold at a handsome profit to the southerners.

Rhode Island at one time had as many as 150 ships a year engaged in the slave trade. So the clause denouncing slavery was stricken out of the Declaration of Independence, and Jefferson remarked to Franklin that whatever the Congress did, the matter of slavery would one day come to a terrible climax in the United States.

"I hope I am not alive when that climax comes," he said.

Franklin made no reply.

The debate on the Declaration of Independence extended from July 2 to July 4. Jefferson's anguish was such that it was evident on his features, and Franklin, knowing what he was going through, comforted him.

"I have always made it a rule," he said, "never to draft any kind of paper that is to be the subject of public debate. The pain is as much as may be borne. I am reminded of a hatter who made that mistake and who suffered much of what you are enduring now."

"A hatter?" asked Jefferson, surprised.

"Yes, sir," said Franklin. "A hatter, a good sincere man who wanted to get everything right. He composed a sign that read 'John Thompson, Hatter, Makes and Sells Hats for ready money,' with a picture of a hat underneath the wording. He then took the sign to his friends and asked them what they thought of it. One said it was a good sign but the word 'hatter' was not needed. It was obvious that a hatter made hats, so the word could be dropped. The hatter agreed and removed the word. Another friend questioned the phrase 'for ready money.' What else would a man sell hats for but ready money? Those words went too and the sign became 'John Thompson Makes and Sells Hats,' with the picture of a hat underneath.

"'Why put in "makes hats"?' asked another friend. 'Plainly you are a hatter and plainly you make hats so that should go out.' These words were removed. A last friend counseled the removal of the words 'sells hats.' 'If you are a hatter,' he said, 'it is obvious to the whole world that you sell hats.' The final sign," Franklin concluded, "contained merely the words 'John Thompson' with a picture of a hat underneath. That's what comes of submitting something you have written to a committee, even of your friends."

Jefferson chuckled; his heart warmed even more to Benjamin Franklin whom he already held in deep affection. The past few years had been extremely hard for the seventy-year-old Franklin. Only three years previously his wife had died and he missed her sorely. He was estranged from his son William, who was loyal to Britain and indeed the royal governor of New Jersey. His whole private life had been shattered in his old age and his public life was shattered too, for Franklin had dreamed of an America which remained in the British Empire and was given room to grow there. That dream had proved hopeless. He had worked hard to achieve it, and he had been deceived and betrayed by the blindness of the British ministers and the British King.

Tom Jefferson knew that it had cost Ben Franklin a terrible searching of his soul to turn his back on Britain and come out for independence, using his enormous influence to persuade the Philadelphia delegation to make the break with England. And yet here was Franklin sitting beside him, despite all his own troubles, public and private, trying to soften for him the ordeal of the

public debate on his draft of the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson was not a demonstrative man. He knew intensities of grief and of love but he suffered these always alone and did not like to make any show of his emotions. But when Franklin had told him the story of the hatter, he reached out and touched the withering hand of the old statesman and philosopher and said gently, "Thank you, Doctor Franklin."

Others came to the defense of Jefferson's words and always foremost among them was John Adams. Both Jefferson and Adams wanted to abolish forever the word "colonies" and substitute for it the word "states" in any reference to the different provinces of America. All through the draft of the Declaration, Jefferson had substituted, wherever possible, the word "states" for "colonies" and he was frustrated to find the Congress reversing this change.

In the critical paragraph of the Declaration he had written, "We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these *states*, reject and renounce all allegiance and subjection to the kings of Great Britain. . . ."

Congress changed this to read, ". . . do in the name and by the authority of the good people of these *Colonies*, solemnly publish and declare, that these united *Colonies* are, and of right ought to be free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown. . . ." The point at issue was that, until the Declaration was official, the states were colonies and that point of view was perhaps legally correct. But Jefferson maintained that the King and his ministers had themselves cut off the American people from Britain, and thus even before the Declaration the different American provinces had ceased to be British colonies.

The debate continued until the evening of Thursday, the Fourth of July. When all were in agreement, it was read through with all the changes—the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence as we know it now. It was listened to in profound silence. None of the rolling power of Jefferson's language had been destroyed. It marched clause by clause to its final noble climax, concluding with Jefferson's unaltered words, "And,

for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

When the last word was uttered, not a sound was heard in the assembly room. It was evening and the street noises had died away—the rumbling of coach and wagon wheels and the cracking of the carters' whips. In the silence it seemed that all America had been listening to the words of the Declaration. The Speaker asked whether there was any objection to the Declaration as amended. There was none. It was put to the vote and adopted.

John Hancock, as president of the Third Continental Congress, signed it on behalf of that body. The scratching of his quill pen could be distinctly heard in the room in which the shadows were beginning to gather.

The work was done. Britain was a foreign power whose troops must be driven from the soil of the new nation which had proclaimed itself to the world as the United States of America.

"We must all hang together," said Ben Franklin solemnly, "or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

17

(THE Declaration of Independence, as written by Jefferson and amended and approved by the Congress, engrossed on parchment and then signed by every member of the Congress. Slips of the pen made during the writing out of the Declaration on parchment have been corrected here.)

The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America.

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel

them to the separation. ——We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. ——That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, ——That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light or transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. ——Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world. ——He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. ——He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. ——He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only. ——He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures. ——He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness

his invasions on the rights of the people. ——He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. ——He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws of Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. ——He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers. —He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. ——He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to Harass our people, and eat out their substance. ——He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our legislatures. ——He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. ——He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: —For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: —For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States: ——For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world: ——For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: ——For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury: ——For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offenses: ——For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies: ——For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments: ——For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. ——He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. ——He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and

destroyed the lives of our people. ——He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. ——He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands. ——He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions. In every state of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.——

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War,

conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. ——And, for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

(On the parchment copy ordered to be engrossed by the Congress, the signatures are in many cases now hardly readable. They are given below with abbreviations eliminated for the convenience of the reader. They read in columns from left to right as inscribed on the document.)

Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton, William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn, Edward Rutledge Jr., Thomas Heyward Jr., Thomas Lynch Jr., Arthur Middleton, John Hancock, Samuel Chase, William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Nelson Jr., Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton, Robert Morris, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin, John Morton, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, James Wilson, George Ross, Caesar Rodney, George Read, Thomas McKean, William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris, Richard Stockton, Jonathan Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham Clark, Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry, Stephen Hopkins, William Ellery, Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott, Matthew Thornton.

18

THE Declaration of Independence was first read to the people of the new country—the United States of America—on July 8, 1776.

The four days between the signing and the reading were

needed to copy the document with all its amendments in a good hand, and see that it was worded exactly as it had been approved. It was read from a platform in the State House yard, which had been erected for the purpose of observing the transit of Venus—that is, the passage of the planet Venus across the face of the sun—on June 3, 1769. This is an event which occurs only four times in every 243 years and is thus of great importance to astronomers. Captain James Cook, the explorer and navigator, had gone to Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus from that island at the time.

Jefferson, present with the other members of the Congress, listening to the Declaration being read slowly by Colonel John Nixon of a Philadelphia militia company, each word distinctly pronounced, thought of the original purpose for which the platform had been erected. Those who had seen Venus cross the face of the sun described it as a little black dot challenging the sun's power as it passed before it from rim to rim.

Jefferson turned to Franklin, who was standing by him. "We are like Venus and the sun," he said. "Opposing ourselves to the greatest power in the universe."

"Venus survived," said Franklin and Jefferson smiled. Ben Franklin, whatever the occasion, always had a quip with a grain of sense concealed in it. Jefferson had known Franklin only a little while but, like many others, began to look on him as a father. During the days when Tom Jefferson had been torn in his mind over the decision whether or not to separate from England, it was Franklin who had comforted him over the need for the step.

When the Declaration was read, the Pennsylvania militia, reckless of the need to ration gunpowder, fired volley after volley in salute to the new Republic, and cheer upon cheer rose from the throng of people of all conditions who had gathered for the reading. The crowd was a representation in miniature of the nation that had just been born. There were apprentices and their masters, merchants and mechanics, farmers and frontiersmen, longshoremen and lawyers, trappers and tradesmen. Some were dressed in the best English worsted and some in deerskins, for western Pennsylvania was then the frontier. Some could read Greek and Hebrew and Latin and some could not read at all. But

they were all mixed up together and they cheered together the pledge that they would defend their independence with their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

The bells in every church started to ring, the pealing led by the great bell in the State House, which was to become known later as the Liberty Bell, as the State House itself was to become known as Independence Hall. All through the night the bells rang, relays of bell ringers taking over from each other.

The Royal Arms of Great Britain were taken down from the State House and burned, and similar scenes were repeated in all the states of the new Union. The printers of Philadelphia worked late hours turning out hundreds of copies of the Declaration on their presses. They were bundled up, the ink still wet, and thrust into saddlebags to be carried by riders to every corner of the new nation.

John Hancock had on July 5 sent a special copy of the Declaration to General Washington, whose headquarters were then in New York City. Washington ordered the brigades of his army to be assembled and the Declaration read to soldiers. The men of the Continental Army, as it was still called, reacted with the same joy as had the citizens of Philadelphia. There was at the time a gilded leaden statue of King George III, mounted on a horse, at Bowling Green. Washington's soldiers pulled it down and melted the lead. A few weeks later they were firing bullets made from the statue of the King at the King's soldiers in the Battle of Long Island.

When the celebration of the first Fourth of July ended in Philadelphia, the Congress turned to other work. A country had been brought into being, but it had no rules for its government, nothing to define the relationship between the thirteen separate states and the central authority; nothing to state how taxes were to be raised, on what basis they were to be levied, who was to be entitled to vote and who was not.

The United States of America existed as a title at the top of the Declaration of Independence, in a Congress of delegates, and in an army of volunteers that now faced the best disciplined troops of Europe.

The Congress then turned to the task of establishing the United States as a functioning government with powers defined

and apportioned. Perhaps out of a sense of mercy, the task of drawing up a plan of confederation stating the relationship between the separate states and the central government was entrusted to John Dickinson. Many members of the Congress sympathized with and admired him. He had led in the fight against the Stamp Act, drafting the "Declaration of Rights" of the Stamp Act Congress. He had drafted two "Petitions to the King" protesting against the royal policy in the American colonies and had been known as the "Penman of the Revolution." And yet he had not been able to take the final step and support the Declaration of Independence.

He was then given the task of outlining a plan for the confederation of the states into a national government, to provide him with a chance of re-establishing his reputation before the public. Dickinson went to the task eagerly. He had a quick legal mind and wrote with ease. He had the job done in a week but the Congress was not impressed with the result.

"It suffers from the vice of all his writing," said Edward Rutledge of South Carolina. "It refutes too much." In short, the hesitancy natural to a highly trained lawyer, who suspects pitfalls where others see only solid ground, proved Dickinson's downfall. In the months that followed, he lost more and more of his popularity until the former "Penman of the Revolution" was talked of as if he were a traitor to the American cause. But Dickinson was a better man than his critics. Unable to sacrifice his conscience for his country, he was nonetheless ready to sacrifice his life for it. He joined the Continental Army as a common soldier and fought with distinction in the bloody bitter battles that lay ahead.

Meanwhile Tom Jefferson was burning to get back to Virginia. Virginia was his home state and his great love. He had been three months in Philadelphia and during that time he knew that Virginia was framing a new state constitution. Here was the great opportunity to put into effect in his home state the principles of democracy which he cherished and for which he had fought in court and Congress.

The work of the Declaration of Independence done, he spent long hours at his writing desk in the bricklayer's house, putting down his thoughts on the constitution for Virginia. He wanted

written into that constitution guarantees of absolute freedom of religion and of the press. He wanted to put an end to the importation of slaves into Virginia. He wanted the death penalty abolished in Virginia except as punishment for the crimes of murder or serious and willful infringement of military orders. He wanted all children, including girls, to have equal rights in inheriting property. Under the old laws, only landowners could vote. Jefferson wanted the government of Virginia to give fifty acres, purchased from the Indians, to all landless men, so that they too could vote.

All these ideas he put down in the form of a constitution for Virginia. He sent copies to his old friend George Wythe, under whom he had studied law, and to Edmund Pendleton, president of the Virginia convention which was meeting to draft the state's constitution.

But Jefferson's proposals arrived too late. Tired with lengthy debate, the Virginia convention had already approved a constitution for the state and was not prepared to reopen hearings to discuss Jefferson's proposals. When Jefferson heard of this from Wythe, his anxiety to get back to Virginia increased. He didn't like what he heard of the new constitution. The two houses of the legislature—Senate and House of Delegates—seemed to him too closely linked. They should be more independent and so balance each other. That was his opinion. He believed that if he got back to Virginia he could introduce bills in the House of Delegates which would remedy some of the faults in the new constitution.

He had personal and pressing reasons for wanting to return to his home as well. His wife Martha, who had been expecting a baby when he left his home in Monticello the previous May, now wrote that she had lost the baby and was ill. She wanted him back home. She was lonely and weak and needed him. Surely there were others who could take over his work in Congress now and permit him to join her?

He wrote to Edmund Pendleton asking to be recalled. His request was not heeded. In desperation, he wrote to Richard Henry Lee to come to Philadelphia and take his place in the Congress. "For God's sake, for your country's sake and for my sake, come," he wrote in his anguish. "I receive by every post

such accounts of the state of Mrs. Jefferson's health that it will be impossible for me to disappoint her expectation of seeing me . . . on the eleventh of next month [August]. . . . I pray you to come. I am under a sacred obligation to go home." But still he was made to stay, working on the problem of the design of a Great Seal for the United States, on what was to be done with the Indians, on questions of taxation and commerce and money for the new Republic.

He tried to put aside his personal agony and he worked away in the little parlor of the bricklayer's house where he always went when he had any writing to do. The bricklayer's wife fretted over whether he was getting enough sleep and enough to eat. He seemed thin and when she retired for the night she could see the gleam of candlelight from under the door. In the mornings when she cleaned the parlor, the candles were gutted to stubs, the smell of them heavy in the room, and there were books in piles about the place. She thanked God that her husband was a bricklayer. You couldn't lay bricks until two and three o'clock in the morning.

Still Jefferson had to stay in Congress. His term as a delegate expired August 11 but he was reappointed for another year. The days dragged by and he almost dreaded the arrival of the post for each time it brought a letter from his wife asking when he would return. His only daughter Patsy (her real name was Martha, after her mother) was three and wanted to know when he would be back. Finally Jefferson took matters in his own hands. He had not only been appointed a delegate to the Congress, but he had been elected by his county to the new House of Delegates in Virginia.

He talked with Franklin and Franklin said, "Charity, it is well known, begins at home. And it might be argued that that is where duty begins too."

Jefferson resigned his seat in the Congress, packed his papers and his portable writing desk into his saddlebags, said good-by to the bricklayer and his wife and headed for Monticello. The journey was nearly three hundred miles and it had to be made on horseback. He rode forty miles a day, until his horse could go no more. He was in a hurry and sometimes took the road and sometimes cut across country. He got back to Monticello on

September 8 and Martha, his wife, was waiting for him, pale but happy.

"They let you come?" she asked.

Jefferson shook his head. "I came without them letting me," he said and took her in his arms.

19

JEFFERSON had almost three weeks of happiness at his home in Monticello. His wife's health improved daily. His very presence seemed to give her strength. The great mansion which he had started building nine years before, and on which he would work for many years to come, had been gloomy while he was away. Now there were smiles on the faces of the house slaves and joking in the kitchen. Tawney, the old mulatto who had been specially bequeathed to Tom Jefferson in his father's will, said even the copper pots in the scullery were smiling because the master was back.

Jefferson loved riding, and the day after his three-hundred-mile trip from Philadelphia, he decided to ride one of his thoroughbred hunters. The horse was led from the stables and Tom Jefferson stood back and eyed it closely. Saddle, stirrup leathers, stirrups, bridle and bit were polished to a high shine and the gelding's golden coat was gleaming. The hoofs were clean and the mane and tail beautifully combined. He took a handkerchief from his sleeve, passed it over the horse's coat and looked at it. Not a speck of dirt showed on the handkerchief.

"Fit to ride," he said, for he would not mount a horse of his own that was not in immaculate condition. He put his foot in the stirrup and his daughter Patsy said, "Papa, can I come?" From his seat in the saddle on the back of the big hunter, she looked like a tiny anxious doll.

"Of course," said Jefferson and nodded to the groom who handed his little daughter up to him. He seated her on the saddle

before him and they set out. Every day after that he took Patsy riding with him.

It was the greatest fun for her—frightening and yet exciting and wonderful. Seated on the saddle before her tall father, she seemed very high up. The ground, when they went into a canter, sped by her so fast she couldn't really see the stones or the grass or the low brush. All was a blur. And the wind caressed her face and her hair came undone and streamed back as if someone was pulling it gently. The first few rides Tom Jefferson took with his daughter he walked the horse. But after a little while she wanted to go faster and soon they would gallop. Then Patsy wanted the horse to gallop all the time and Jefferson had to point out to her that the horse had to rest sometime.

The two were inseparable—the man six foot two and lean and the tiny doll of a girl who had to reach up to hold his hand. As his wife grew stronger, Jefferson encouraged her to come for short walks and then rides with him. They went together around the grounds, talking about a fountain that was to be put in the center of the lawn, and a marble bench in an arbor that they planned together and that would be a special place for them. The weather was glorious and the trees—maple, beech and oak—beginning to turn so that the forest glowed in reds and yellows and dark greens.

There was always company for dinner and Jefferson's favorite guest was Philip Mazzei, an Italian from Tuscany who had come to America some years previously. Mazzei was originally the friend of Thomas Adams of Williamsburg and it was Adams who introduced him to Jefferson. He was a man of standing in his own country, for he was a doctor who had practiced medicine in Turkey and had been ambassador of the Grand Duke of Tuscany in London where he had been friendly with Ben Franklin.

When Adams brought Mazzei to meet Jefferson, the two took to each other immediately. Jefferson insisted that Mazzei stay the night at Monticello. He was surprised to find that Mazzei spoke English fluently and Mazzei was surprised to find that Jefferson spoke Italian fluently. The two were up early the next morning before anyone else in the household was awake. They went for a walk together and Mazzei said he wanted to try to grow wine grapes in Virginia and raise wheat for export. Jefferson was

immediately intrigued. When they returned from their walk, he had given Mazzei two thousand acres of land on which to raise grapes and wheat and the Italian, who had come for the night, stayed instead for years, building a house close to Monticello and cultivating his land.

Jefferson liked Mazzei, and he had sent him a copy of his Declaration of Independence as soon as it was approved by the Congress. Now, at the dinner table, they talked of crops and weather and grapes and wine and music, the rights of man and the needs of the soil, and Martha Jefferson listened with awe to this astonishing husband who at thirty-three years of age could talk with knowledge on any subject on earth and with any man.

"Madam," said Mazzei, "you are married to a genius. I do not pay him a compliment. I state a fact. Tell me, how long has he been playing the violin?"

"For many years—he practices three hours a day."

"And how long has he been interested in agriculture?"

"For many years—long before I met him."

"And in architecture?"

"Since he was a boy."

"And law and philosophy and economics and currency and medicine and the language of the Indians?"

Martha Jefferson laughed. "He has always been interested in all these things," she said.

"And no doubt he practices them three hours a day? But there are not that many hours in a day. That is why I say he is a genius without fear of being wrong. A genius can achieve in one hour of work what would be the labor of a week for another. When I first came here to meet Mr. Jefferson, I expected to find a man of perhaps a little extra learning. Nothing more. But I have found Socrates in the wilderness."

"Come, sir," said Martha Jefferson. "This is hardly the wilderness."

"It was the wilderness, madam," said Mazzei, "until Thomas Jefferson tamed it."

There was truth in that, for Jefferson at Monticello had built, on what had recently been the frontier of Virginia, a mansion as stately as any to be found in Europe. But it was far more modern than any other such mansion.

Doors were balanced so as to open at the slightest touch. The clock in the entrance hall told not only the time but also the day of the week. The mechanics for telling the day of the week was operated by cannonballs and it tickled Tom Jefferson, who hated bloodshed, to be thus turning the sword into a plowshare in his own way. Between pantry and dining room was a revolving door with shelves to quicken the service of dinner and keep the heat and smells of the kitchen from the dining quarters. The revolving door also saved work for the servants. A dumbwaiter between the ground floor and his study made it easy to send up his meals without disturbing him while he was writing—for he could not abide being interrupted at work.

He liked to know from which direction the wind was blowing, but didn't always have time to go outside to look at the weathercock on the roof. So he put a pointer on the bottom of the weathercock so that the direction and strength of the wind was recorded on a dial on the ceiling of his parlor. He put a parquet floor (this is a floor of inlaid wood, in patterns) in his drawing room and it was the marvel of America, being the first of its kind ever seen in the country.

The older plantation houses of Virginia, some of them charming but built without benefit of architect, were spoiled by a clutter of other buildings and rooms that surrounded them—the laundry room, kitchen, storerooms, icehouse and so on. All these were necessary adjuncts of the main building, but often took on the appearance of a number of squalid shacks. Jefferson solved the problem of providing these necessary structures without spoiling the handsome appearance of Monticello by putting them underground. He even put the servants' quarters underground and designed an efficient ventilating system for them. There they were sheltered from blizzard and blazing sun, his heating bill in wintertime was greatly reduced, and his house servants did not have to walk through rain or snow to get to their quarters and so their health was better. Over the tops of these buildings he put terraces and walks so that Monticello was not surrounded by a ragged hodgepodge of structures, but by beautifully landscaped gardens, and had a grace and elegance unrivaled to this day.

Nobody of course taught Tom Jefferson architecture. He studied the art himself, sending to Europe for books on building

styles. He learned carpentry, plumbing, bricklaying, the problems of stress on arches and on pillars. When he needed a new key for a lock he cut it out of metal himself with a file, and when a particular kind of lock was not obtainable he made it.

Around Monticello he planted orchards of peaches and apples and cherries and Mazzei worked with him in trying to get oranges to grow in Virginia. They raised some but they were sour. Jefferson made what is now called marmalade out of them. He grew all his own vegetables and had a pond stocked with trout, for he liked to produce his own food.

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—these were the rights Tom Jefferson had asserted belonged to all men. He found them in Monticello, raising his own food, building his own house, reading his books, riding, playing his violin and talking until late at night with any guest who visited him.

He had almost three weeks of this kind of life and then—Martha being now much stronger—he took her and Patsy off to Williamsburg to consult Dr. Brydon over his wife's health. They stayed in George Wythe's house in Williamsburg. Dr. Brydon said there was nothing constitutionally wrong with Mrs. Jefferson. She needed rest and he advised Jefferson to stay as much with his wife as he could.

"A wife, sir," said Dr. Brydon, "is but half a creature when her husband is away."

"A husband, sir," replied Jefferson, "is but half a creature when away from his wife."

Tom Jefferson resolved to keep Martha by his side so he could take care of her. But the decision was hardly made before pressure was put on him to break it—pressure coming from the Congress of the United States.

One of the principal objects of the Declaration of Independence had been to serve notice to the world that the United States was now an independent nation with no ties whatever with Great Britain, and thus in a position to enter into alliances with other powers.

The other power that Congress had specifically in mind was France. Everybody knew that an alliance with France was desperately needed if the Revolutionary War was to be won. Hardly had the Declaration been approved and Jefferson left Philadelphia

for Monticello when the Congress voted to appoint commissioners to the court of the French King.

Their job would be to persuade France to help in the war against England—help in the first instance by supplying the materials of war and finally by openly joining in the struggle. The commissioners were selected by ballot and when the results of the balloting were announced, the men picked as commissioners to France were Ben Franklin, Silas Deane and Tom Jefferson. A courier was sent to Jefferson to inform him of his appointment. The courier carried a sealed letter in which Jefferson was informed that the mission to France was to be kept a close secret. The vessel on which the commissioners were to sail was not to be announced and Jefferson was to inform the president of the Congress, John Hancock, what port he would leave from and at what time a ship should be sent to take him to France.

For three days Jefferson could not make up his mind what reply to send to the Congress. For three days he kept the congressional messenger waiting while he debated the matter, torn between the love of his wife and the needs of his country. From early youth, trained by gentle George Wythe, he had learned to submit all problems to reason and put emotions aside as unreliable counselors. But here was a problem in which his emotions were so deeply involved that they could not be put aside. And yet, by the process of reason, he finally arrived at his decision.

The mission to France would not fail because of his absence. There were others who could go, men older than he and men versed in diplomacy and capable of speaking French as fluently as he. On the other hand, no one could take his place with Martha. So he wrote Hancock a letter, painfully worded, begging to be excused from the mission to France.

"No cares for my own person, nor yet for my private affairs, would have induced one moment's hesitation to accept the charge," he wrote. "But circumstances very peculiar in the situation of my family, such as neither permit me to leave nor carry it [his family with him to France] compel me to ask leave to decline a service so honorable and at the same time so important to the American cause. The necessity under which I

labor and the conflict I have undergone for three days, during which I could not determine to dismiss your messenger, will, I hope, plead my pardon with Congress."

Hancock understood and Ben Franklin went to France to attempt to persuade a Catholic monarchy to come to the aid of a Protestant republic. It was the kind of job that wise old Ben Franklin was eminently fitted to undertake.

The day after writing to John Hancock, Jefferson took his seat in the House of Delegates of the Virginia legislature.

While he had been riding with Patsy at Monticello and talking with Philip Mazzei about rice farming in Italy, and with a new bricklayer, Randolph Johnson, on mixing mortar, his mind had been busy also with the defects in the new constitution of Virginia. The constitution was now the law. But he made notes on a number of bills he wanted to introduce in the House of Delegates to make the state more democratic.

Many of the laws on the statute books of Virginia had been taken over, unaltered by as much as a comma, from the old colonial laws administered by the British. Jefferson knew Virginia law thoroughly and knew too that some of these laws were vicious and should be repealed or amended. He couldn't change the constitution, but he could try to change some of the laws on the statute books.

When he took his seat in the House of Delegates on October 11, 1776, he wasn't Tom Jefferson, agriculturalist, philosopher, musician and architect. He was Tom Jefferson, reformer, defender of the rights of people who could never own a home like Monticello, who could never hope for the influence that was his to command as a prominent figure in Virginia aristocracy. To achieve this, Tom Jefferson had to declare war on his own class, take violent issue with his wealthy friends at whose lavish dining room tables he had sat, drinking French wines from Venetian glasses resting on tablecloths of Chantilly lace. He had to wrest from his friends privileges and influence which their families had enjoyed for over a hundred years. Some never forgave him and looked upon him as a traitor to his own kind—a man set upon the ruination of all that was good in Virginia. But Jefferson was undaunted.

At the opening of the legislature, it was expected that no

important business would be enacted. But Jefferson had hardly exchanged greetings with his friends, taken his seat and gained the eye of the Speaker when he asked leave to introduce a bill for the establishment and organization of new courts of justice in Virginia. His motion was approved. Virginia was well aware that the old courts needed revision. Jefferson was certainly the man to work on that problem.

The big surprise came the next day. Jefferson was again on his feet asking leave to bring in another bill, this time one of a revolutionary character. The greater portions of the rich land in Virginia, obtained in the early days for little or nothing, were held in what was called fee tail. Fee tail meant that the owner could not divide his land among his sons and daughters. All had to go to one descendant. Another land law, primogeniture, provided that when a man died without making a will, all his property went to his eldest son.

The effect of the two laws was to produce in Virginia a landed aristocracy who possessed enormous wealth through inheritance. Because of their wealth, these families had great influence and it was from them that the judges, legislators and other rulers of the state had been drawn in the past. These families constituted an aristocracy of wealth. Jefferson wanted to replace this with an aristocracy of the mind.

His bill would make it illegal for land in the future to be deeded in this manner. Big estates must be divided among the children of a family, as the current owner decided, and this division would eventually dissolve the great wealthy families of Virginia. There would be no big single landowners, but instead a vast number of people owning sufficient land to support themselves. Government would be handed over to the people instead of being passed from generation to generation to a privileged few.

No single piece of legislation that Tom Jefferson introduced during the whole of his life aroused such animosity against him as this bill. The great families of Virginia—the Randolphs, the Carters, the Pages—to most of whom Tom Jefferson was related either by blood or marriage, saw in this one measure the utter destruction of their privileged position.

Edmund Pendleton, whose influence was great as Speaker of

the House of Delegates, led the opposition to the bill and it was vigorous. Pendleton, a warm friend of Jefferson's, was an able debater and a formidable opponent. Day after day Jefferson, called a traitor to his own kind, battled Pendleton and other influential delegates, fighting to abolish these laws. For eleven days he argued his case while Pendleton would concede in one area and then attack in another.

"He's like a will o' the wisp," Tom Jefferson told Martha. "I can never tell when I have won, when I am rid of him. He retreats from one position only to reappear in another. Indeed, when he grants me a point I am unsure whether I have achieved a victory or suffered some hidden loss."

Patrick Henry, now Governor of Virginia, was not there to help Jefferson in these debates. Nor was George Wythe who was still in Philadelphia as a delegate to the Congress. Jefferson had to fight what was largely a lone battle. When finally it seemed that he had won on the issue of land held in fee tail—that is, land which could be deeded only to one person—Pendleton introduced what seemed to be a minor and reasonable amendment.

"I have been beaten on every point by my amiable friend Mr. Jefferson," he said, smiling at Tom, for the two held each other in the highest respect and never doubted each other's motives. "Mr. Jefferson is a reasonable man and has always been the first to defend, and properly defend, the rights of others against harsh or seemingly unjust laws. He will then have no objection, I am sure, to defending the right of a landowner to deed all his land to one descendant with a provision that it is not to be divided in any way by that descendant, if he so wishes."

"I am sorry," said Jefferson, immediately spotting the trap. "But I do object. This provision seemingly so innocent, and so just, would in effect destroy the whole reform which I am so earnestly seeking. My whole desire is to take land out of the control of those who are long dead and put it under the control of those who are living, giving them the right to dispose of it as they will.

"Can any gentleman explain to this House why a man dead twenty, forty or a hundred years should still have control over the disposal of huge acreages of land in Virginia today? Can any gentleman give me a good reason why when a man inherits a

piece of land, he must be bound in disposing of it by a grandfather or a great-grandfather long gone from this earth? Are we to be ruled, gentlemen, by the dead or by the living? That is the nub of the question."

Jefferson's words were well received by the younger delegates, many of them denied by the old laws any share of their ancestral estates. Pendleton's amendment was defeated by only a few ballots, but the holding of land in fee tail was abolished in Virginia in a bloodless land reform instituted by Jefferson.

Next came the law of primogeniture—the law that said that if a man died without a will, his land must go to his eldest son, the rest getting nothing. Again Pendleton fought against any change and again Tom Jefferson had to argue the case sentence by sentence, word by word, comma by comma. At one point Pendleton proposed that in the case of a man dying without a will, the eldest son should receive at least twice as much as any of the others.

"You will surely have no objection to such a provision," he said to Jefferson. "The eldest son is the head of the family. His position as head of the family is confirmed in scripture and in civilized custom. He should get at least twice what the others get."

"I will have no objection, sir," said Tom, "if you can prove to me that the eldest son eats twice as much as the second eldest, that he needs twice as many clothes, twice as much money and twice as big a house." Pendleton lost that point and eventually the law of primogeniture went with the law of fee tail.

Such a sweeping victory over established and crippling custom would have been more than enough for ordinary men. But it was only a start for reformer Tom Jefferson. He turned to slavery, which he abominated. He introduced a bill aimed at the gradual abolishment of slavery. The bill provided that the children of slaves were to be born free, and were to be educated at the state expense. When they grew up, they were to be settled in communities where they would be utterly free of the taint of slavery. The proposal got nowhere.

"How can they talk of freedom and buy and sell their fellow human beings?" Jefferson cried in anguish to his wife when his bill was defeated. "If they believe God is just, are they not afraid to face Him as masters of slaves?"

On the issue of slavery he would not be comforted. He fought it all his life and achieved one real victory. He was able to get the Virginia legislature to pass a law prohibiting the importation of new slaves into the colony. That ended the degrading spectacle of the slave market where male slaves were sold as "bucks" and their wives as "fillies." But an inner anguish over the existence of slavery remained with Jefferson to the day of his death.

He had reformed the land laws. He had done what he could about slavery. But he was not finished. He turned to the church. The Church of England was the official church of Virginia. Its clerics were supported by taxation of the people, even though those paying taxes were Quakers or Presbyterians or Catholics. Many of these clerics became rich landowners who attended church only on Sunday and did little to guide the spiritual life even of their official congregations. Furthermore, there was no religious toleration under the law as it stood in Virginia. It was a crime to hold a religious conviction which differed from that of the Church of England. It was a crime not to go to church and it was a crime to attend any service other than that of the Church of England. Jefferson fought against all these injustices until he had obtained for Virginia what was finally to be obtained for the nation—separation of Church and State and freedom of worship.

Still it was not enough.

He pressed for and obtained the rewriting of all the laws of the colony so that they were put into a language anyone of a reasonable education could understand. Here Pendleton was his ally and George Wythe, returning from Philadelphia, worked with them on a committee which in a short time reduced shelves of lawbooks to 126 clearly written laws that filled only ninety printed pages.

In this rewriting of the language of the laws, Jefferson was able, with his colleagues, to obtain a revision of their contents. The death penalty for all crimes but murder and treason was abolished. He introduced a bill to provide free schools for children. They were to get three years' free instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, and the best of the children were to go on to higher schools. Finally, the cream of the crop were to get a free education at William and Mary College.

This education bill Jefferson regarded as all-important. It would develop and train the talents and minds of the young

people of Virginia and help them to vote and govern themselves wisely. This was what Jefferson aimed at when he talked of replacing an aristocracy of wealth with an aristocracy of the mind. His education bill was only partially approved, but he succeeded in getting a form of free primary schooling for the children of Virginia.

And so Jefferson, the reformer, went on with his work, building the Republic of America from the ground up—from Virginia the state to America the nation.

But in the midst of all this work he could not forget Monticello. His home always called him. He went back as often as he could. And on April 1, 1777, an event took place at Monticello that filled him with happiness. He had planted some cherry and peach trees and, rounding a bend in the garden, found their branches powdered with blossoms. He hurried back to tell Martha. "They are in bloom," he said. "The buds opened with the sun." There were tears of pleasure in his eyes at the coming of spring.

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MEANWHILE the bitter flood of war was rolling over New England. Boston was liberated in March only for New York to fall in September.

Overwhelmingly outnumbered, the Continental Army was driven off Long Island and then Manhattan Island, and straggled south to put the Delaware River between itself and its foes. Washington's credit with his countrymen fell to almost nothing. Even staunch men began to doubt his ability and wondered whether he ought not to be replaced by someone of more military experience like Charles Lee. Among the doubters were men of integrity like Dr. Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, a friend of Jefferson and one of the most advanced medical men of his day.

The war news reached Virginia only after long delays. Washington kept in close correspondence with Patrick Henry, Gover-

nor of the state, and Henry and the Virginians supported Washington to the fullest in every request he made for men and arms. Patrick Henry now lived in the large Governor's mansion in Williamsburg. He took no great pleasure in the place. He still spoke with an up-country accent and dreamed of the times he had gone roving through the Virginia forests with a powder horn slung around his shoulders and a gun cradled in his arms, hunting game. He disliked ceremony and hated writing. He was in his early forties and had to wear glasses now. He attributed the impairment of his eyesight to the amount of reading he had had to do as a lawyer and member of both the Virginia legislature and the Continental Congress. Jefferson smiled over this for the fact was that he, Jefferson, did ten times as much reading as Patrick Henry. Of course, he was seven years younger. But if reading was a factor in failing eyesight, then Jefferson would certainly have to wear glasses, and he didn't.

Once Patrick Henry, a guest at Monticello, had looked over Jefferson's huge and growing library and, somewhat abashed, announced that he ought to read more. He was of a fiery temperament, and when he made a decision, he wanted to do something about it then and there. So he borrowed from Jefferson two volumes of the essays of Hume and swore that, by thunder, before he returned them, he would have read every mortal word they contained. But he brought them back on his next visit and confessed that he'd hardly been able to get through two or three chapters.

"He's as dull a dog as ever picked up a pen," he complained. Then he added lamely, "Well, he seems dull to me."

Patrick Henry's mind was active, questing, adventurous and fretted under closely reasoned arguments. He developed, while Governor, a little cabinet of advisers, and the men he chose were both his friends and great readers to boot—making up for his own deficiency in that area of learning. Jefferson was one of this group and so were George Wythe and George Mason; the latter had drafted the Virginia Constitution and was a lifelong friend of George Washington. (There was a predominance of men named George in America in those days, a testimony of the former loyalty to the English kings. After the Revolution the name fell into disfavor.)

Virginia, like all seaboard states, had its own war problem.

There were over a thousand miles of navigable sea coast in the state, all utterly without protection. An effort was made to create a state naval force to protect the towns and seamen, but the problem was, all in all, beyond the resources of Virginia.

Exposed on the eastern coast to royalist raids, Virginia's western frontier was open to the attacks of the English and Indians. Pioneering families had pushed westward into what is now Kentucky, but was then considered part of Virginia. Little settlements were started here and there. The Indians, encouraged by the British, menaced the settlers, who had no one to protect them. Were they really a part of the state of Virginia? Should they establish a government of their own? How were they to get arms and powder to protect themselves? These were the questions these settlers faced—orphans of the frontier, abandoned, they felt, to the savagery of Indian warfare.

Then one day a young man in deerskins and carrying a long rifle came into Williamsburg. He had come, he said, to take his seat in the Virginia legislature because he had been elected to it. He gave his name as George Rogers Clark and, when pressed, gave his age as twenty-four. The Virginia legislature was not then in session and Clark was advised to see Governor Patrick Henry about his election. He asked for an interview and got one readily; soon the two were seated together in the great mansion that suited neither of them. They talked of the frontier from which George Rogers Clark had come.

"There's a place called Harrod's Town," said Clark. "It's on the other side of the Cumberlands in the area the Indians call Kentucky. A lot of Virginians have been roving over the mountains and they built this place. Well, there was a meeting held there, June 6, and me and John Gabriel Jones were elected delegates to the Virginia Assembly and that's why I'm here."

The whole thing of course was as illegal as it was bold and that appealed to Henry. The area vaguely known as Kentucky had no right to elect a delegate to the Virginia legislature.

"You know," said Henry, "that this whole thing—your being elected as a delegate to our legislature—is as weak a case as ever I have been asked to embrace."

"I do," said George Rogers Clark.

"And what do you have to say further about it?"

"Nothing—except that the more desperate it seems, the more it pleases me," was the reply.

"By thunder," said Henry, "and me too." But he could not take it upon himself to admit Kentucky into the state of Virginia as a political entity. He called his official council together to debate the problem.

The council ordered that Clark be supplied with five hundred pounds of gunpowder for the defense of the people of Kentucky, and a little later, with the approval of the legislature, Kentucky became a county of Virginia, its inhabitants protected by Virginia's laws and wealth. George Rogers Clark returned to Kentucky with the news of its admission formally to the state of Virginia and a year later he was back in Williamsburg with a plan that shook even Patrick Henry.

In brief, he wanted to open up the war on the frontier, attacking the British garrisons on the Ohio and forever destroying the British and Indian menace to the western frontier of Virginia. He would need men, materials and money for the job and he came to ask for them at a time when Virginia was desperately short of all three herself.

Clark arrived back in Williamsburg on November 5, 1777. This time he didn't go directly to see Governor Patrick Henry. He kept his frontiersman's ears open for remarks and talk that would tell him how Patrick Henry and the council would react to his plan. It was really a plan whereby Virginia, already supplying men and arms to the Continental Army, would go to war in the West and go to war alone. None of the other states was likely to join in. Virginia, represented by twenty-five-year-old George Rogers Clark, would attack England in the West so that when the Revolutionary War was won, the road would be open for American expansion westward—not blockaded by Britain.

For a while Clark hung around the clubs and streets and taverns of Williamsburg, listening to the talk and sounding the people out on their reaction to opening the war on the western frontier. He had a frontiersman's sense of strategy, even in political matters. He had taken part in a lot of councils with both whites and red men and knew what an advantage it was to have powerful allies when he wanted to win a particular point. He called on Tom Jefferson who was from western Virginia, like

himself, and whose family were pioneers as Clark's family were pioneers. Indeed the Clark family home was not far from Monticello.

Jefferson was nine years older than George Rogers Clark, who had hardly finished exchanging formalities with him before he had unrolled a map of the Ohio Valley containing portions of the Mississippi. He pointed to the British forts along the rivers.

"As you see, sir," he said, "the British cut us off from the West which is a natural direction in which we have to expand—to the Mississippi, and maybe beyond. More than that, the British Governor at Detroit, Henry Hamilton, has roused all the Indian tribes—Sioux, Chippewas, Sauk and Fox, Winnebagos, Potawatomis and Menominees—and they are on the warpath. Over the Cumberland gap, there isn't one of our settlements that is safe. We have to fight back or be wiped out and when the war ends Britain will claim the West even if she loses her thirteen colonies in the East."

Jefferson knew something of the country of which young red-haired George Rogers Clark was speaking. In his extensive law practice, when he was younger, he had represented many of the settlers in establishing their claims. Where others looked east to the Atlantic and to Europe for America's future, Jefferson always looked west and saw beyond the rolling horizon of the Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountains a vast empty continent which might bring forth and nurture the greatest democracy on earth.

"What will you need, Mr. Clark?" he asked quietly.

"Very little," was the reply. "Powder, about two hundred hand-picked men, money to buy supplies and build barges for travel on the rivers—and secrecy. Secrecy is as important as powder."

Jefferson nodded. "Hand-picked men," he said. "You will need frontiersmen like yourself."

"Yes," said Clark. "Tough men who don't like roads, know the Indians and can use a hunting knife in the dark. I have my eye on most of the fellows I need. And they have particular reasons for being prepared to fight."

"Such as?" asked Jefferson.

"Well, there's Ted Lyon. His brother Daniel was killed by Indians while headed for Logan's Fort on the Green River. Then

Glen Peters. He found his sister a mile out of Cumberland, dead and scalped, with her husband dead beside her. Hamilton is buying scalps from the Indians. We call him 'the Hair Buyer.' There's others—Sam Moore, Barnery Stagner—his father was killed half a mile from the fort—and so on. I won't have trouble getting my two hundred men. Most of my trouble is likely to be right here, Mr. Jefferson, getting my plan approved."

"I think not," said Jefferson. "But there are others you should talk to to gain a solid support before Governor Henry. Not that I want to suggest for one moment that Mr. Henry will not support your plan. But it will greatly strengthen his hand if you have first the support of others."

Jefferson then arranged for Clark to speak with George Mason, George Wythe and Richard Henry Lee, and when he had the support of all these men, they went with him to Governor Patrick Henry, who quickly agreed to the whole proposal.

Clark was given a war chest of £1200 sterling and authority to raise his company of riflemen and have barges built where needed. Patrick Henry had not, as Governor, the authority to give Clark £1200 for his expedition. He had to ask the Virginia legislature to vote the amount. There was danger here of publicizing the whole plan if any of the legislators started questioning what a young frontiersman wanted with so much of the public money. But between Jefferson, Mason and George Wythe, skillful legislators all of them, the grant was slipped through as being needed for the defense of western Virginia.

His plan approved and his money voted, Clark slipped out of Williamsburg without fuss on January 4, 1778. His mission in effect was to open the West for American settlement by driving the British out. The odds against him were enormous.

Clark mustered his men and built his boats at the falls of the Ohio near present-day Louisville. He headed down river to capture what he regarded as a key British settlement, Kaskaskia, at the junction of the Kaskaskia River and the Mississippi, in what is now the state of Illinois. He shot the rapids of the Ohio and on June 28, 1778, while his party was making its way down the river in boats, the sun was slowly blotted out by an eclipse. Darkness descended on the river and the forests around. Most of Clark's men were uneducated and highly superstitious. They

regarded the eclipse of the sun as a warning and wanted to turn back. They could face Sioux or Redcoats without a tremor but not the supernatural. They stopped paddling, staring at the slowly disappearing sun and feeling the cold shadow of the eclipse strike through their deerskins.

Some made elaborate signs of the cross, for they had a smattering of religion. Others fumbled in medicine bags obtained from the Indians; many had married Indian women. They took out pinches of ground root and animal hair and threw them on the surface of the river.

"We're doomed," cried one of the men in Clark's boat. "Not a man of us will come back up this river alive!"

"If a shadow can kill you, you are doomed all right," said Clark. "For myself, I've no fear of shadows."

"It's a sign," said the man. "A warning."

"If it's a sign," replied Clark, "then the sign is for the British and not for us. Get your powderhorn up higher. There's more men die of damp powder than shadows before the sun."

So he cajoled them out of the mood of despair and they went on down the river, considerably relieved when the sun reappeared. They drove the boats on down the Ohio until they came to the mouth of the Tennessee. Here they hid the boats and, landing, struck north through the forest toward Kaskaskia. They could take no more food than each man could carry and, because of the need of surprise, dared not shoot game. The last two days of the march there was not a morsel of food for any of the men.

But Kaskaskia was unguarded and fell to them without a shot being fired. The date was a significant one, July 4, 1778, the second anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Two other settlements, Cahokia and Prairie de Rocher, surrendered to Clark without resistance, and George Rogers Clark found himself in possession of the whole territory, but without sufficient men to hold the area if there were any resistance.

The town of Vincennes, through the aid of a French priest at Kaskaskia, also surrendered to Rogers, and this was a very important conquest, for adjacent to Vincennes was Fort Sackville, an important frontier strongpoint which was now in American hands. Lieutenant Colonel Henry Hamilton, the British

commander in Detroit, decided to strike back. He was as bold and as tough a man as Clark. Furthermore, he was cruel and unscrupulous in waging war, for he set a bounty on scalps and encouraged the Indians to bring him the scalps of any Americans they could get. He paid the same price for a child's scalp as he paid for a man's and even joined the Indians in their war dances when they flung their tomahawks at a pole strung with human scalps.

Hamilton collected sixty Indians and about 170 soldiers and struck southward from Detroit in midwinter, determined to recapture Vincennes. The journey he undertook was appalling but he succeeded. He reached Vincennes on December 17 and took the town without a struggle, for there were only one or two of Clark's men there to defend it. When news of the fall of Vincennes reached Clark at Kaskaskia, the people there were thrown into a panic. Hamilton the Hair Buyer was so feared that some were in favor of fleeing into the wilderness and others pleaded with Clark to leave with his riflemen so that Hamilton, when he arrived, would not butcher the inhabitants of the little settlement.

Many of Clark's own men drifted off, their enlistments expired, and he had at this crisis in his campaign scarcely one hundred riflemen in his own force. But Father Gibault, the French Catholic priest who had persuaded the inhabitants of Vincennes to surrender to Clark originally, went about in Kaskaskia quietening the fears of the people. Clark thought the situation over calmly and decided to do exactly what Hamilton had done: make an impossible midwinter march and attack Vincennes with a handful of men.

He wrote a note to Patrick Henry outlining his plan; Henry showed it to Tom Jefferson. "I know the case is desperate," Clark wrote, "but, sir, we must either quit the country or attack Hamilton. . . . Who knows what fortune will do for us? Great things have been effected by a few men well conducted."

On February 7, his little army reinforced by a few volunteers, some of whom were Frenchmen who had no love of the British, Clark set out. The weather was mild and a thaw had set in so that the ground was under water in most places. But there was plenty of game and for the first few days the men were in high spirits.

At the end of a week, Clark had reached a point within twenty miles of Vincennes and now faced the crossing of the Little Wabash. Here he ran into his first real difficulty, for the early thaw had widened and deepened the river. It took two days to get across the Little Wabash. Then came the swollen Embarrass River which now had the proportions of a lake. It had flooded over its banks and hours were spent in finding a place where it could be forded. And when the Embarrass River was crossed, the Wabash itself had to be negotiated. The land between the two rivers was flooded.

Those who were too sick or exhausted to wade were put in canoes and pulled over the flooded territory by their fellows. There was no dry ground to sleep on or light a fire on. Men lay in freezing water to get a rest, fearful that a rise of the flood would drown them. Still they went on, their progress reduced to three miles a day—three miles not of walking or of marching but of wading waist- and shoulder-deep in flood water, with their rifles held over their heads to keep the locks dry.

On February 22 the men were all noticeably weaker and on February 23 a crisis of exhaustion arose. The men said they could not go on. Their voices were reduced to hoarse whispers. They had slept that night, shivering, in canoes and boats in the middle of the flood. The prospect of getting back into the icy water and wading on to launch an impossible attack on a strongly defended fort was more than they could face. The men refused to get out of the canoes and go further.

Clark raised himself up, looked about him and slipped shoulder-deep into the flood. "Come on," he said. "Grumbling won't make you any drier." He didn't even look over his shoulder to see the effect of his words, but waded on away from the canoes. The men cursed him and said that, by thunder, they wouldn't follow him. And even while they were saying this, they got into the water and waded after him.

That day's wading was the worst of the adventure. The water was deeper and the men tripped and fell on submerged logs. Some went under, their wet deerskins making it impossible for them to swim. They were hauled to the surface by their fellows. When they found a stump of a tree sticking out of the freezing flood, the men clung to it in clusters, getting a little rest before

going on. But they went on because always ahead of them was George Rogers Clark. At last the water shoaled and they reached high ground. They were but two miles from Fort Sackville and the town of Vincennes, shivering and soaking wet.

They lit fires, dried their clothes, cooked the last of their rations, measured their store of powder and decided they hadn't got enough for anything approaching a battle.

Clark was not dismayed. He captured a lone Frenchman and sent him into Vincennes with a message. The message left no one in any doubt as to what he was going to do. He was going to take Vincennes and Fort Sackville. Those inhabitants of the town who sided with him should get into their houses and stay there. Those who wished to oppose him should go over and join Colonel Hamilton in Fort Sackville.

Then he rounded up his men and, with drums beating and flags flying, marched into Vincennes. The fort was set apart from the town which lay open to him. To give the impression that he had a far greater force than he actually commanded, Clark made his men march down the main street of Vincennes. They then split into columns, going down the side streets, to rejoin at the main street near the entrance of the town and go down it again.

To those at the other end of the main thoroughfare, it looked as though an endless force of Americans was pouring into the town. Some fled to Fort Sackville and announced that they had witnessed a miracle. George Rogers Clark had crossed twenty miles of flooded country in midwinter with several regiments and every man wore clothing as dry as a bone!

The news spread dismay in Fort Sackville. Clark had warned the defenders of the fort that he would attack it that night and take it within the next few hours. At sunset he marched out of Vincennes toward the fort and opened fire on its eleven-foot-high palisades. The rounds were fired against no particular target and seemed to Colonel Hamilton a waste of powder. Hamilton knew Clark was no fool and not a man to waste powder if he had none to waste. He concluded then that the Americans had ample powder, which was what Clark wanted him to conclude.

Throughout the night Clark's men threw up earthworks before the fort. At dawn the defenders opened fire with artillery. Clark's Rangers picked off the gunners, never wasting a shot. By mid-

afternoon Colonel Hamilton had had enough and surrendered. Clark admired the man for his courage but detested him for buying scalps from Indians. He sent him back to Williamsburg in chains. The man he sent him to was Tom Jefferson, who had now succeeded Patrick Henry as Governor of Virginia.

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Tom Jefferson was elected Governor of Virginia June 1, 1779, when he was thirty-six years of age. It was an office which, like many others he was to occupy, he did not seek. It was thrust upon him because of his work with George Wythe, George Mason, Richard Henry Lee and many others in reforming the laws of Virginia. Jefferson was in the forefront of this work. He saw in the Revolution not merely a chance to overthrow the rule of Great Britain, but a unique opportunity to establish in the United States a democracy so just that it would light the way for the rest of the world.

Before he became Governor of Virginia, Jefferson took one step which could have cost him all his popularity. The prisoners taken by the Continental Army after the Battle of Saratoga were sent to Virginia and quartered in Albemarle, only a few miles from Monticello.

They were both German and British and were housed and fed at state expense. Virginia was hard pressed for money. Her finances were in tatters, and as the result of the war and the British blockade by sea, all her trade had ceased. She supplied men and money to the Continental Army. It seemed hard then to have to house and feed several hundred British and German prisoners. A plea was made to Governor Patrick Henry to have the prisoners removed from the state. It was argued that the provisions they consumed were needed for the Continental forces.

Henry and his council were about to order the prisoners sent out of Virginia—where, nobody seemed quite sure—when Jeffer-

son heard of the proposal. He knew the prison camp well. The men had converted the rough barracks in which they were placed into something approaching homes. They had begged for a little ground and laid out vegetable gardens to grow food for themselves. They were peaceable and civil, and if they were sent somewhere else, they would undoubtedly be moved from place to place and many of them would sicken and die.

Jefferson wrote a petition to the Governor and council on behalf of the prisoners. No one but the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence would speak for the captured enemy. He argued that the prisoners' health would be jeopardized if they were moved about from place to place. He asked that "humanity should not be kicked out of door in America, and interest only attended to." He pleaded that "It is for the benefit of mankind to mitigate the horrors of war as much as possible." He wrote on behalf of the wretched prisoners with the same fervor he had employed in writing for the people of the thirteen colonies. His plea was successful and the prisoners were allowed to remain at Albemarle. They never forgot his kindness to them.

But then, after he had been elected Governor, he had to deal with another kind of prisoner. This was Colonel Henry Hamilton, who had arrived in chains. With him, also in chains, were Philip DeJean, Justice of the Peace for Vincennes, and William Lamothe, captain of volunteers, men who were as bloody as their master in the treatment of settlers. They arrived with a request from Clark that they be "severely dealt with."

Jefferson, the most humanitarian of men, was asked to inflict an inhuman punishment on three of his fellows—to chain them by their arms and legs in a prison cell. He hated the whole concept. It was contrary to his nature. He had been Governor of Virginia only two weeks when he was presented with this problem and to solve it he called together his council.

The council reviewed all the crimes against the frontiersmen committed by the three, led by Hamilton. They included not only scalpings but torture and beating of prisoners. When all the evidence was in, the council decided that the three should be put in irons, confined in the dungeons of the public jail, debarred from the use of pen, ink and paper and excluded from all conversation with others—except their keeper.

The council had more than the individual crimes of Hamilton in mind when this decision was taken. Men of the Continental Army, captured by the British, had been treated not as prisoners of war but as felons. They were put in prison ships where the greater part of them died of smallpox. They were kept in chains and given only offal to eat. They lived in their own filth, being deprived of any sanitary facilities. The dead were taken off these terrible prison ships every evening and buried in unnamed graves below the high-tide mark.

Jefferson's decision, taken with his council, to keep Hamilton, DeJean and Lamothe in irons raised a storm around him. Sir Guy Carlton, Governor of Canada, protested against it and so did General William Phillips, commander of the British prisoners at Charlottesville, who was himself a prisoner of war. They accused Jefferson of a violation of faith and of inhuman conduct.

Jefferson wanted to do what was right. He wrote to Washington and, after outlining the crimes of which Hamilton was guilty, said that if there was anything illegal in the punishment involved he would gladly change it. Washington consulted with his general officers and wrote back that Hamilton could not "according to the usages of war . . . be subjected to any uncommon severity." He added, however, that "I should not hesitate to withhold from him a thousand privileges I might allow to common prisoners."

Jefferson reviewed the case again with his council and decided to publish all the crimes of which Hamilton and his lieutenants were guilty. He would take the chains off Hamilton and the other two and allow them a reasonable amount of liberty in return for their parole not to attempt to escape or plot against their captors. But Hamilton was a hard and proud man. He was brilliant, brave, cruel, unbending and completely contemptuous of the Americans. He refused to give his parole. In particular, he refused to promise not to say anything to the prejudice of the United States. He wanted, he said, "freedom of speech."

Jefferson put him back in jail and wrote Washington that, as far as he was concerned, Hamilton was in jail of his own free will. He could get out if he would sign the same parole that everybody else signed. The British, in the meantime, demanding Hamilton's release, had stated that unless Hamilton was freed of

his chains, they would put chains on all American officers in their prisons.

On getting this news, Jefferson came very close to losing his temper. He said it was lucky for Hamilton that his fate had been decided before the threat was made, otherwise things might have gone even worse for him. He would not, he declared, be bullied by British threats and he defied the British to carry them out. There were far more British officers in American custody than American officers in British custody. If it came to chaining prisoners, the British would lose heavily, he said.

Many attempts were made to have Hamilton freed in an exchange of prisoners, but Jefferson would not free him. The man was savagely hostile to Americans. To free him would be to have him return again to Detroit, arouse the Indians once more and start his bloody scalping campaigns in the territory that George Rogers Clark had conquered for the new nation. So Jefferson kept Hamilton in prison. In doing so, he ensured the new frontier and helped his friend George Rogers Clark.

Up to this point most of the campaigns of the war had been fought in the northern states and Virginia had not been invaded by the King's troops. But now the tide of war swung from the North to the South. Jefferson, a man of peace and reason, was brought directly into the problem of waging war. He had no experience in the field of war; this was probably the only area in which he had done no reading. His duty, as he saw it, was to supply Washington with all the men and materials that Virginia could produce. He had also the job of maintaining a force of militia in Virginia for the defense of the state should it be invaded. But he soon discovered that there were not enough men, not enough arms, not enough clothing, not enough food, not enough ammunition to defend the state and supply Washington.

When Charleston fell to the British, it seemed highly likely that Virginia would be invaded from the South, and the legislature voted to give Jefferson emergency powers to defend the state. He was authorized to raise 20,000 militiamen and to appropriate cattle, linen for tents, horses, wagons, boats and crews or whatever was necessary to supply them.

Jefferson soon found that he had, in effect, been voted nothing.

He could raise the militiamen on paper but not in the field. There were no supplies to be found for those who answered the call to serve the state. He sent the men in companies to different commanders only to have the commanders ask him not to send men unless they were equipped. General Gates wrote him that forty men had arrived at his camp at Hillsboro, North Carolina. They had no equipment and he had no stores for them. He asked Jefferson to send no more men unless they were supplied.

Even when Jefferson was able to raise needed military stores, they arrived spoiled at their destination. He sent 300 cartouche (cartridge) boxes to one commander, but when they arrived the leather sides had been stripped off them to mend shoes. He got 600 more from the Board of War, but they were unfit for use. He ordered 500 axes for Gates' army but the factory was able to turn out only twenty a day. And when he was able to get any quantity of supplies together, there were often no wagons to cart them to where they were needed. All the supplies and men he could get together he sent to General Gates in the South. All were lost at Camden, South Carolina, when Gates was overwhelmingly defeated.

After the Battle of Camden the road to Virginia from the South lay open. Jefferson determined to raise more men and arm them as well as he could to block the British invasion. He got some from the western counties—frontiersmen who reckoned fighting was a part of living. But many of the militia raised had never seen a shot fired in anger, were unarmed and improperly clothed and fled from battle in sheer fright.

Virginia was about to learn what the northern states had learned some years before: you can't make a soldier by giving a man a gun and a flag. In Virginia's case there wasn't even a gun to give him. Guns, tents, cartridge boxes, food wagons had been sent without stint to what Jefferson called the "grand army" (that is, the Continental Army), and in her hour of agony Virginia had little or nothing with which to defend herself.

As commander-in-chief of Virginia Jefferson had no standing army, no navy, no military department, no experienced quartermaster to gather stores and see to their dispatch, no system other than the civil government sending out calls for the militia. He inherited a defenseless state which was now to be threatened on

three fronts. It was to be attacked from the sea by Benedict Arnold, who had now gone over to Britain. It was to be attacked from the south by Cornwallis. And it was to be constantly menaced from the west by the Tories (those who sympathized with the British cause) and Indians in the British pay.

Jefferson did his best. He was very much alone, for the great men who were his friends were far away. But eventually help came to him. When he had been Governor six months, a young Virginian, James Monroe, who was then only twenty-one years of age, called on him. Monroe wanted to study law, he said, and asked Jefferson to supervise his studies. It was a curious request in the middle of a war. But Monroe had already served in the Continental Army. He had been present at the Battles of Harlem Heights, White Plains, Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. He had been wounded at Trenton.

"You wish to study law," said Jefferson, "and I have a desperate need to study soldiering. Perhaps we can help each other." James Monroe had a quick mind and an active curiosity. He undertook to teach Jefferson all he knew of the handling and training and supplying of troops and Jefferson undertook to guide his studies in law.

Jefferson set up a communications system with the Continental Army to the south, standing between Virginia and the Redcoats under Cornwallis. He posted riders every forty miles along the road and dispatched Monroe to General Greene's headquarters to send him news. Greene had replaced Gates after the defeat at Camden. Monroe, his saddlebags stuffed with lawbooks, went off to be Jefferson's eyes on the southern front.

From the north, where Washington was holding the Continental Army together in a watch in New York, Jefferson got frequent reports from the commander-in-chief. Washington warned him whenever a large number of British ships left the New York waters. Whenever he received such a warning, Jefferson had to decide whether to call out the militia or gamble that the ships were not headed for Virginia. If he called out the militia on too many false alarms, the day would eventually come when they would refuse to answer a call. If he failed to call the militia when an invasion actually took place, he would be forever disgraced.

It was no easy task to summon the militia. Virginia was a big state with a poor system of roads. To get messengers to the county lieutenants telling them to collect men took days. For the lieutenants to comply with the request took days more. Even a Napoleon could hardly have defended Virginia. But that was the task given to Tom Jefferson. Washington, knowing Jefferson's situation, sent Baron von Steuben to command the Continental forces in Virginia—such as they were. Jefferson was enormously relieved to have a military expert in the state, for Von Steuben was the man who had trained the Continental Army during the terrible winter at Valley Forge. He had served under Frederick the Great, and when he arrived, Tom Jefferson handed over to him command of the militia as well as the Continental forces in Virginia.

The first blow fell in the autumn of 1780 before Von Steuben had arrived. On September 11 Washington wrote Jefferson that a large number of British were leaving New York on transports bound either for Virginia or Carolina. He advised Jefferson to remove any war stores from the neighborhood of navigable rivers where the enemy could get at them.

But Jefferson was helpless to do anything of the sort. He did not know where the blow would fall. Virginia had many rivers and her stores had necessarily to be kept on their banks for the rivers were the only reliable routes through much of the state. He warned the county lieutenants of the news and waited for more information. When the information came, it was too late.

On the morning of October 20 a huge British fleet, estimated at over fifty ships, put into Hampton Roads at the mouth of the James River. A thousand infantrymen supported by a hundred cavalry were landed. Under the command of General Alexander Leslie, they took over the countryside, rounded up all the stores they could find, went where they pleased, and there was no organized militia to oppose them. The British force stayed for a month on the lower reaches of the James and then departed. They had come in the hope of linking up with Cornwallis who was expected to push north from Carolina. When he did not appear, they left.

When they had gone, Jefferson tried to get the legislature to approve a standing army for Virginia. He did not trust the

militia. But the legislature did not act. Jefferson sent to the members a letter from Baron von Steuben, who had by then arrived in the state, on the condition of the men from Virginia who had been sent to join the Continental Army. They were for the most part either old men or young boys and many of them were ill. Von Steuben could not take care of them nor turn them into soldiers and so was sending them back again. The legislature was unmoved.

New Year's Eve, 1780, fell on a Sunday. That morning Tom Jefferson was up early as usual and sat down to breakfast very worried about his wife Martha. She had given birth to a daughter on November 3 during Leslie's invasion. The baby, christened Lucy Elizabeth, was sickly and his wife was not well either. Jefferson breakfasted alone, attended by his servant Jupiter and oppressed by troubles private and public. He ate mechanically, scarcely noticing what dish was put before him, and when he had all but finished there was a heavy knock at the front door of the house. Jupiter left the dining room silently, exchanged a few words with a man in the hall and came back with an envelope which he handed to Jefferson.

Jefferson took it, glanced at the envelope and looked up at Jupiter, puzzled. "This is not for me," he said. "It is for General Nelson." General Thomas Nelson was commander of the Virginia militia under Jefferson. Jefferson called in the messenger. "Who does this come from?" he asked.

"Mr. Jacob Wray of Hampton."

"Do you know what it is about?"

"Ships," said the messenger. "There are some ships off Willoughby's Point. . . ." Jefferson didn't wait to hear more. He tore open the envelope and there it was—a second British invasion. Twenty-seven ships had been sighted off Willoughby's Point. They showed no colors. The writer did not know whether they were French or British, but they looked as though they were coming up the James River to land men.

Jefferson sent for Nelson and told him to go to the mouth of the James and take control there. He sent Captain James Maxwell, who was commissioner of Virginia's largely imaginary navy, with him. He wrote to Baron von Steuben asking for his

help. Then he waited, for without further news there was nothing more he could do.

Two days went by without a word. Then came a letter from Nathanael Burwell, county lieutenant of James City. The fleet, Burwell wrote, consisted of twenty-one transports and two men-of-war. There were a number of flat-bottomed boats astern of the ships and they were full of men. It was headed up the river with the wind fair. Burwell had only 200 men under his command and could do nothing to prevent the invasion. The ships were under the command of General Arnold.

Jefferson told the House of Delegates of the news and reported that the ships were going up the river as fast as horsemen, carrying news of them, could ride along the banks. The House, alerted to the danger at last, decided that the militia must be called up. To speed the call the delegates adjourned the meeting and, leaping on their horses, rode as hard as they could to their own counties to rally the men.

There was a race now between horsemen and ships, the ships moving steadily up the river, all sails drawing, raising a white bow wave before them, the horsemen clattering at a gallop to Henrici, Hanover, Goochland, Fluvanna, Albemarle and Amherst counties to call out the militia.

The men were to assemble at Richmond and Petersburg on the Appomattox, according to the counties they came from. They were to come under their own officers and bring their own arms. But when they arrived, they were to put themselves under the command of field officers who would be waiting for them.

This was Baron von Steuben's idea. He'd seen enough of militia officered by country gentlemen with no battle experience. He wanted men in command who had smelled powder, and Jefferson, knowing the touchiness of the Virginians, wrote to the county lieutenants explaining this need and asking them to cooperate. But the gathering of the militia was slow and meanwhile the British ships pushed on up the river. There was a small battery at a narrow strait of the river called Hoods and as the ships came into range the battery opened fire. The British landed a party and took the battery which was defended by only fifty men. The river road to Richmond, the capital of Virginia, now lay open to them.

Jefferson himself took to the field. He rode to Westham, a few miles to the north of Richmond, to supervise the removal of stores to the other side of the river where the enemy would not look for them. He worked at moving the stores until late at night and joined his wife and children at Tuckahoe, where they had been sent at one in the morning. He got a few hours' rest and then sent his family to Fine Creek, an estate about twenty miles above Richmond where they would be safe.

When they were on their way, he joined Colonel John Nicholas of the local militia, crossed over the James River and supervised the removal of arms and other stores to safety. He found a large supply of guns and ammunition lying in the open. They had been taken from Richmond and just dumped on the road. He had them removed and then rode on to the village of Manchester, which lay on the south bank of the James River opposite Richmond.

When he got there he found that Richmond had been taken. The British had landed infantry and cavalry at Westover, farther down the river, marched to Richmond, set fire to a foundry there, a boring mill and the powder magazine. Across the James River Jefferson could see the smoke pouring up from the burning buildings; he caught an occasional glimpse of a Redcoat as files of soldiers moved along the waterfront streets. There was no one to oppose them.

Jefferson had been up and in the saddle since before dawn. It was now late in the afternoon. He was anxious to get in touch with Baron von Steuben and set out for a place called Chetwoods to meet him there. But his horse suddenly collapsed under him from exhaustion. Jefferson took off the saddle and bridle and walked to the nearest farm where he found an unbroken colt. He borrowed it from the farmer, saddled it and went on, sick at heart over the inability of his beloved Virginia to defend herself from the enemy.

Baron von Steuben was not the mildest tempered of men, but he showed remarkable patience during the British invasion of Richmond. Munitions, taken from storehouses to get them out of the hands of the British, had been hidden without any record of the hiding place and nobody could find them later. Flints were in one place and gunlocks in another and nobody knew exactly

where. Von Steuben got men without guns and then he got guns without locks, by which time the men had gone home in disgust.

Then on January 9, 1781, while Jefferson was trying to restore some order in Richmond after the British left the town, a big-boned, red-haired man in deerskins called on him.

"I figured you might need a little help, Mr. Jefferson," he said. "So I came."

It was George Rogers Clark. For a moment Tom Jefferson could hardly say a word. Then he called for a horse and sent Clark to Baron von Steuben with a note reading, "Colonel Clark of Kaskaskia, having heard of the situation of things, has come to me this morning. I send him to you, supposing you must be in want of officers."

The American frontiersman and the Prussian general sat down together to plan one blow at the enemy. The place they decided to deliver it was at Hoods, the narrow strait through which the British ships must pass when they withdrew down the river. There had been a small battery at this point which the British had raided when they came upstream. It had been impossible to remount the guns, but Von Steuben pointed out that this was something the British didn't know.

"Give me some men and I will set a trap for them," said Clark. He was given 300 riflemen and thirty horsemen. He put a small company of riflemen as a picket on the point of land at Hoods and hid the rest in low brush to the rear. When the British ships came off Hoods, they stopped and landed troops from eighteen boats to attack what they thought was a battery ready to fire on the ships. They met the picket line, which fired off a few rounds and retreated.

Cheering, the British charged right into the ambush Clark had set for them. The militia opened fire and seventeen Redcoats were killed and as many wounded. But the British rallied and came on with bayonets. The militia broke and fled, for they had no bayonets, and that was the end of the engagement.

It was the only real engagement of the invasion. The British retreated to the head of the river where Arnold had established headquarters at Portsmouth.

Tom Jefferson loathed Benedict Arnold. It was humiliating to have Virginia invaded and be so helpless, but it was even more

humiliating that the invasion should be headed by a man who had betrayed his country. He wrote to General John Muhlenberg, who was on Von Steuben's staff, suggesting a plan to capture Arnold, using a few men like George Rogers Clark from the frontier. He believed frontiersmen could get into Arnold's camp and seize the traitor and he was prepared to offer a reward of 5,000 guineas for the capture. But before such a plot could be perfected, Washington sent a small force to the aid of his native Virginia. At the head of it was a young man whom Jefferson was to come to love—the Marquis de Lafayette.

22

MARIE JOSEPH Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, was not quite twenty-four years of age when he led an army of scarcely a thousand men into Virginia to the succor of the state and Thomas Jefferson.

He had been nineteen and a captain of dragoons in the French Guards when he heard the news of the Declaration of Independence and his heart went out immediately to the Americans. It was a curious love affair this—between a French nobleman with an immense fortune and American republicans to whom nobility was detestable. But Lafayette was at heart a republican himself, and the fact that he had inherited an ancient title and a vast estate did not prevent him for a moment from deciding then and there to join the American cause.

In December 1776 he obtained from Silas Deane, one of the American agents in Paris, a letter which would give him, he thought, the rank of major general in the Continental Army. He had hardly received this paper before news of the defeat of Washington's army in the battle to hold New York City reached France. Lafayette's friends begged him to remain in France. The American cause, they assured him, was lost. Even Ben Franklin, who had recently arrived in Paris, tried to persuade Lafayette to give up the idea of joining Washington's stricken army.

But Lafayette started fitting out a ship in Bordeaux to take him to America. The British ambassador managed to have the ship seized to prevent Lafayette's sailing. Lafayette was detained in custody. The ship was sent to Spain. Lafayette escaped in disguise, joined the ship and sailed. He landed in Georgetown, South Carolina, and hurried to Philadelphia. The only English he spoke was what he had learned on crossing the Atlantic from the sailors on board the ship.

As soon as he reached Philadelphia, Lafayette presented himself to Congress with Silas Deane's letter. Congress was embarrassed. There were plenty of Americans who had been refused the rank of major general and who had more claim to it than this boyish French nobleman. And yet a high rank had been promised him by Silas Deane and on this promise he had hurried from France at his own expense to help the cause.

Lafayette understood the difficulty. In fumbling English he told the members of the Congress that rank did not matter. He would serve as a simple volunteer without rank if they would accept him. Congress was so impressed with his zeal that the members decided to give him the rank of major general in any case, and sent him to Washington. Six weeks later Lafayette took part in the Battle of Brandywine and was wounded on the field. He fought at the Battles of Barren Hill and of Monmouth, and now here he was leading a handful of Continental troops to the aid of Virginia.

Lafayette had a gaiety in the face of disaster that was infectious. Even the news of his coming cheered Jefferson immensely and he started to work again to raise more militia, more volunteers for the Continental Army, more guns and ammunition. But before Lafayette arrived, the British had struck another blow at all-but-defenseless Virginia.

Arnold, after his first raid, had withdrawn to Portsmouth and there he was joined by Major General William Phillips, who had been sent with 2,600 reinforcements to take over command from Arnold. Phillips had been one of the British prisoners for whom Jefferson had interceded with Patrick Henry to prevent their being moved from place to place. He was often a guest at Monticello in the days before Tom Jefferson became Governor. Jefferson thought so highly of him that when he became Governor, he

wrote Phillips a letter of farewell, saying he would miss his company. And now Phillips, freed in an exchange of prisoners, was back again at the head of an invading army.

On April 18, 1781, Arnold, on Phillips' instructions, put 2,500 men on board ships at Portsmouth and sent them up the James River. They landed on the south bank and marched toward Petersburg. There General Muhlenberg, who before the war had been a parson, blocked his path with 1,000 militia who had never before been in battle. This time the militia gave a good account of themselves. They opened fire with guns charged with grapeshot but they were outnumbered and outflanked and finally had to withdraw. There was no panicky flight but a withdrawal in good order. Virginia was learning about war at firsthand, and men's nerves were steadier.

Muhlenberg led his men back across the Appomatox and Petersburg was looted by the Redcoats. The invaders pushed on up the river, warehouses going up in smoke and scattered actions being fought wherever the outnumbered militia could make a stand. Arnold led one branch of the British invasion and Phillips another, and the two met at Manchester on the south bank of the James River opposite Richmond.

It was then that Lafayette, coming down from the north, reached Richmond. There was a curious stunned silence as the two armies faced each other across the James River. Not a shot was fired. Both sides seemed to sense that a critical stage in the war had been reached. Phillips and Arnold, dealing only with militia, had been able to do what they wished in Virginia. And now here were Continental veterans led by a brilliant officer. The tide was about to turn.

The British did make one attempt to send a small party across the river to discover the strength of Lafayette's forces. Six hundred of them, under Arnold's command, went over to the Richmond side, but they were charged by a patrol of sixteen cavalry and fled. The arrival of Lafayette seemed to have broken the nerve of the British troops.

As soon as he had reached Richmond, Lafayette sent a message to Baron von Steuben to join him there. He called on Jefferson, who had remained in the capital, to present his compliments.

"My plan, Your Excellency," he said, "is to hold Richmond and I delight in doing it, for it is the capital city of that state which first boldly spoke out for independence."

The genuine admiration in Lafayette's voice as he said this took Jefferson by surprise. He looked keenly at the young Frenchman to see whether this was a court speech, a piece of mere flattery, or sincerely given. But it was plain that Lafayette meant every word. The young nobleman had looked forward immensely to meeting the man who had written the Declaration of Independence. It was the spirit of that Declaration that had brought Lafayette to America as a volunteer. Jefferson looked weary and older than his years. Lafayette did not know that Jefferson's little daughter Elizabeth had died just two weeks before.

"I am more happy than I can say that you have come to our aid," Jefferson said. "I am not a soldier. I . . ."

"Many of us are soldiers, Your Excellency," said Lafayette quietly. "There is only one Jefferson."

At the time of his meeting with Lafayette, Jefferson had only one more month to serve as Governor of Virginia. He had served two full terms of a year each and the state constitution forbade him to retain office beyond June 1 of 1781. But no one had been elected to replace him. Nobody was anxious to be Governor with Virginia in such a state. Jefferson's Lieutenant Governor, Dudley Digges, instead resigned. The members of the legislature could not be called together because of the turmoil the state was in and because there was no safe place where they could meet. It was becoming increasingly hard for Jefferson to get even the members of his council together for advice. He was, as was so often the case, utterly alone in his trial.

Then came another blow. Cornwallis, who had been held at bay in North Carolina, now plunged north to link up with General Phillips and Arnold. Lafayette was likely to be caught between the two British armies. He had received news that General Anthony Wayne was hurrying to his aid, but Wayne was delayed. There was nothing for Lafayette to do but to retreat to prevent the British getting between him and Wayne.

Cornwallis was sure that he had Lafayette trapped and to Jefferson it seemed the Frenchman could not escape. With only a

few days more in office, he once more wrote to the county lieutenants asking for men for Lafayette. But Virginians, still not thoroughly aroused to war, resisted turning over their horses to provide a much-needed cavalry.

The British seized what horses they wanted. Jefferson had no such power, and when he got the power, it came too late. Two British armies were already in the state and the time to raise and train an efficient cavalry force had long passed.

Almost in despair, with the whole problem of organizing the defense thrust into his hands, Jefferson wrote to Washington. He suggested that Washington himself come to Virginia to restore public confidence. If Washington came, Jefferson said, the difficulty would be to keep men out of the army. Richard Henry Lee also wrote Washington, asking him to come to Virginia. But Washington believed that the war would be won or lost in New York and not Virginia and so he refused to leave the Hudson.

Jefferson's appeal to Washington was made on May 28, 1781. He had only three more days to serve as Governor. The House of Delegates finally met in Charlottesville, three miles from Monticello, and on May 30 passed a resolution that on the following Saturday, June 2, they would elect a new Governor. But they did not get around to the election until June 12. The new Governor was General Thomas Nelson, who had commanded the state militia under Jefferson. Jefferson had recommended him as his successor.

When his term as Governor was over Jefferson returned home. He was worn out and he needed desperately to rest. He needed his own house and his own family around him and he was sick with the frustration he had endured as a wartime Governor, with his inability, whatever his efforts, to stem the British invasion of Virginia. He had done everything he could to the best of his ability and yet the failure weighed heavily on him. It was the blackest period of his life to date, and the five years which had passed since the writing of the Declaration of Independence seemed to him five centuries.

He returned to Monticello weary, nervously exhausted and so troubled he could scarcely sleep at night. What good was it to write of independence if he could not sustain it in the field against the enemy?

23

CHARLOTTESVILLE being only a few miles away, several members of the Virginia legislature, including the Speaker of the House, were staying at Monticello.

The British were ravaging the country from Richmond, and Lord Cornwallis, certain that victory was within his grasp, was planning to send some important captives back to London. Most important among them was to be Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence. Another was Richard Henry Lee, who had introduced the resolution for independence into the Continental Congress. Another was Patrick Henry, whose famous speech with the ringing phrase, "Give me liberty or give me death," had rallied the country six years before. All these were either at Monticello or at Charlottesville. To capture them, Cornwallis sent his "hunting leopard," Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton, to raid Charlottesville and Monticello.

Tarleton was a man who was both feared and hated. He was a brilliant, dashing cavalry leader of high courage. He had also slaughtered a great number of Americans who had surrendered to him after being assured that he would spare their lives. Therefore in the Revolutionary War, the massacre of men who had already surrendered was called "Tarleton's Quarter."

Tarleton's raid to seize Jefferson, Lee, Henry and others was kept completely secret even from the 180 dragoons and seventy mounted infantrymen who were to take part in it. He left Richmond and headed up the Rivanna River in what looked like an ordinary expedition to seize and burn American property. He rode hard and did not stop until he reached the Cuckoo Tavern in Louisa County, forty miles in a direct line from Charlottesville. Here the men dismounted to rest their sweating, hard-breathing horses and here Captain Jack Jouett of the Virginia militia saw them.

Jack Jouett stood six feet four and weighed 200 pounds. He

knew horses and he knew cavalry and he knew that horses were not ridden hard until late in the evening without there being a very urgent reason.

He dared not question the troopers in the tavern about their mission. Nor did he dare mix with them to pick up a chance remark. What military prize, he wondered, lay in this quiet part of the country—a prize so important that over 200 men on excellent horses had been sent to seize it? There could be only one answer: Tom Jefferson, whose home at Monticello lay up the Rivanna River. Tarleton, the "hunting leopard," was out to seize Tom Jefferson and as many men of the Virginia legislature as he could. There could be no other reason for this expedition.

It was ten o'clock at night when Jouett came to this conclusion. He knew exactly what he had to do. His own home was nearby. He hurried there and mounted his big hunter Prince Charley and set off on a forty-mile ride to warn Jefferson. He dared not take the river road along the banks of the Rivanna to Monticello. He had to go through the back country, through tangles of brush and low-branching trees, guided by his own knowledge of the country and an occasional glimpse through the treetops of the stars.

He rode through the night, not sparing his horse. Branches slashed at his face as he plunged through the trees, ripping the skin. He galloped on, up hills and through gullies, and at four-thirty in the morning plunged up the little mountain at whose top stood Monticello. The whole house was in darkness and peace, only its roof and the pillars before it gleaming softly in the moonlight.

Jouett jumped off his hunter and went up the steps before the enormous front door two at a time and knocked on the door with his riding crop. In a few minutes the door was opened and he shouted to the trembling servants to rouse Mr. Jefferson for Tarleton was coming with a body of troopers to capture him. Jefferson himself appeared at the door and Jouett repeated his message. Jefferson was quite calm.

"Do you think we have much time?" he asked.

"I cannot say, sir," said Jouett. "But if they do not stop on their way, they will be here any minute."

"I think there is at least time to offer you a glass of wine and

thank you," said Jefferson and poured a drink of his finest Madeira for Jouett. Jouett drank the Madeira and then set off to Charlottesville to warn the others, including Patrick Henry. He reached Charlottesville in less than half an hour and warned Henry and the others.

Jefferson arranged for Martha and his two daughters to be taken by carriage to Enniscorthy, about fourteen miles away, where they would be safe.

While he was making these arrangements, Captain Christopher Hudson of the militia arrived to say that the troopers were already at the foot of the mountain and he must leave immediately.

The Jefferson family went off, but Jefferson, who had had to wait for a horse to be shoed, tied the horse at a point on the road between Monticello and nearby Carter's Mountain. He walked up the mountain with a telescope. From the top he could get a view of Charlottesville and, looking through the telescope, could see no troopers in the streets of the little town.

He decided then that he still had time and started back toward Monticello, for he was anxious about some papers he had left in his study. As he walked to his horse, he noticed that he had dropped a light sword and returned to pick it up. On top of the mountain again, he took out his telescope once more for a look at Charlottesville. He was astonished to see the green coats of Tarleton's mounted infantrymen swarming in the streets.

There was no time now to get his papers. He jumped on his horse and galloped off into the woods after his family. Actually, the British had already reached Monticello when Jefferson at last decided it was time to escape.

Tarleton didn't come to Monticello himself. He sent some troopers there under the command of a Captain McLeod. He gave strict instructions to McLeod about the mansion. Nothing was to be taken away or damaged. When McLeod arrived there, he asked the servant for the keys to Jefferson's study. When he got them, he locked the door to ensure that nothing was disturbed by his troopers.

Jefferson's servants did not of course know that their master's possessions were to be spared. One of his slaves, Martin, was passing Jefferson's silver to another, Caesar, through a trapdoor

leading to the cellar when the troopers arrived. Martin slammed the door shut on Caesar and Caesar stayed there eighteen hours in silence until the raiders had gone.

Cornwallis meanwhile had moved up to Elk Hill, another house of Jefferson's at the junction of the Rivanna and Fluvanna rivers. In contrast to Tarleton's behavior, Cornwallis let his men burn the barn, destroy the crops and even cut the throats of young colts. Thirty Negro slaves were carried off. When Jefferson learned that his slaves had been taken away, he went white with indignation—even though he rarely got angry.

"If he did this to set them free and provide for them, I would have helped him," he said. "But he did it only to let them sicken and die." As soon as he could, after the surrender at Yorktown, Jefferson set out to look for his slaves. He found only two alive. The rest had died of neglect and smallpox.

After his escape, Jefferson rejoined his family and he had to tell Patsy over and over again about his adventures. She was enormously proud of her father.

"My daddy went back for his sword to fight all those troopers," she told everybody. Even her truth-loving father could not get her to accept another version.

When he got back to Monticello with his family, news of another attack on him reached Thomas Jefferson. A friend of his in the legislature sent word that a motion was to be introduced at the next meeting asking for an inquiry into the conduct of "the Executive" during his last twelve months in office. The Executive, of course, meant both Jefferson and his council, but Jefferson knew that the inquiry was directed at him. The resolution was sponsored by George Nicholas, a young member of the House of Delegates and the eldest son of Robert Carter Nicholas who had been one of Jefferson's friends in happier days.

Jefferson knew that young George Nicholas had not initiated this resolution himself. He was being used as a tool by others. He suspected, though he was never able to prove the suspicion, that Patrick Henry was behind the resolution. He was outraged and saddened. He had admired Patrick Henry deeply. He, Patrick Henry, Richard Lee and George Wythe had been the four who had pushed the old colonial legislature of Virginia toward boldness and independence. He had supported Patrick Henry loyally

when Henry was Governor of the state. Now this cloud passed between the two friends. Although Jefferson continued to speak only good of Patrick Henry, there was a coldness between the two from that time on.

As soon as he received news of the resolution, Jefferson wrote to George Nicholas. "I am informed that a resolution on your motion passed the House of Delegates requiring me to render account of some part of my administration without specifying the act to be accounted for," he said, and demanded to be told exactly what charges were laid against him or exactly what part of his conduct needed investigation.

Nicholas replied that there was no particular instance of misconduct in mind. People who were entrusted with an administration ought to be ready to give an account of any part of it. The young delegate then defended himself.

"You consider me in a wrong point of view when you speak of me as an accuser," he wrote. "As a freeman and the representative of freemen, I consider it as both my right and my duty to call upon the Executive to account for our numberless miscarriages and losses so far as they were concerned in or might have prevented them. . . . I had no private pique to gratify. . . ."

The letter went on, however, to specify certain aspects of Jefferson's second term as Governor that Nicholas thought needed explanation. Among them were:

The total want of opposition to Arnold on his first expedition.

The dissolution of a considerable body of militia on our southern frontier at the time of Greene's retreat for want of orders from the executive.

The want of timely orders to the counties of Amherst, Augusta, etc.; after the adjournment of the Assembly from Richmond.

The great loss that the country has sustained in arms, etc., exclusive of those destroyed by the enemy.

The rejection of an offer made by Cole Campbell, Christian and McDowell to raise regiments for the southern services.

So the charges went on, always containing the imputation that Thomas Jefferson had been so lax in his efforts to defend Virginia that the state had been mercilessly pillaged by the enemy. Virginians felt keenly the invasion of their state, the more so because Arnold had led one of the invading fleets. They were looking for a scapegoat and Jefferson was a wonderful target—Jefferson who, with his revision of the laws, had destroyed the hold of the older families on Virginia.

Rumors accusing Tom Jefferson of conduct close to treasonous and even cowardice spread throughout the thirteen colonies, as those who hated his reforms got busy with loose pens and loose tongues. Nothing that had ever happened to Jefferson hurt him so deeply as this, for he loved Virginia as he loved the cause of independence and as he hated tyranny.

He started to prepare his defense. He sent messengers to the county lieutenants asking them for statements on his many efforts to call out and equip the militia. He was not afraid of the charges but only terribly hurt by them because they were dishonorable and they sought to dishonor him, a man who had always put honor above everything.

He had many friends, however. Among them were Edmund Pendleton, who had worked with him in the early days of the rebellion against the King's tyranny, and James Madison, whom he had befriended when they first met only a few years before in the Virginia House of Delegates. Without a word from Jefferson, his allies decided to help him. John Blair, one of the Virginia delegates to the Continental Congress, had resigned and John Page, Jefferson's boyhood friend, John Banister and other friends of Jefferson were appointed to a committee to name a substitute. They selected Thomas Jefferson so that, while Jefferson faced investigation for his conduct as Governor of Virginia, he was appointed by the state of Virginia to be the state's delegate to the Continental Congress. He was also elected to the state legislature as a gesture of confidence.

The charges against him had been leveled in June. It was not until December that there was any hearing on them in the House of Delegates. At the hearing Nicholas, who had framed the original resolution calling for an inquiry, was not present. Patrick

Henry, whom Jefferson believed to be behind the charges, did not rise to press the case.

Indeed everybody seemed thoroughly ashamed of themselves. A committee which had been appointed to frame the charges specifically and receive any evidence supporting them reported to the House that there was nothing in the charges—that they were utterly groundless.

But Jefferson's name had been blackened and he did not welcome this report. He wanted an inquiry held so that item by item and charge by charge he could deal with everything that had been said against him.

He rose then in the House, tall, spare and haggard, and challenged the delegates to impeach him. It was not sufficient to ask for an inquiry, he stated, to blacken his name before the whole nation, and then to say when the damage to his reputation was done that an inquiry was needless and he was innocent. The House, silent and in an agony of mortification, was forced to listen while Jefferson reviewed the whole of his administration as Governor, told in every detail all he had done to save Virginia and demanded in so many words that they be decent enough to try him.

A trial, however, was quite impossible. There were no charges that could be brought. Jefferson had been made the victim of something quite common in eighteenth-century politics both in Britain and America—a smear campaign.

When he had done with his defense, member after member rose to eulogize his work as Governor. The members who spoke were deeply moved and sensed the terrible wrong they had done to Jefferson. The House passed a resolution "that the sincere thanks of the General Assembly be given to our former Governor, Thomas Jefferson, Squire, for his impartial, upright, and attentive administration while in office. The Assembly wish in the strongest manner to declare the high opinion which they entertain of Mr. Jefferson's ability, rectitude, and integrity, as Chief Magistrate of this Commonwealth, and mean, by thus publicly avowing their opinion, to obviate and remove all unmerited censure."

The vote on this was unanimous, and when it was taken the delegates crowded around Jefferson, shaking his hand and patting

his shoulder. He thanked them quietly and left for Monticello. Then he wrote, resigning his seat in the Continental Congress.

He had come to a firm resolve. He would never again take any public office or work in the public service. He wanted only to live as a private citizen with his family, among his books, building his house and carrying out his agricultural experiments. He wanted the peace and the quiet of his home. The blow that had been struck at him deprived the United States for a while of the services of a man who had won the respect of the world.

24

By 1781 the war was in its fifth year. The alliance with France, patiently forged by John Adams and Ben Franklin, had turned the tide, and even King George III, who had already suffered one fit of insanity during which he mistook one of the oaks in Windsor Park for Frederick the Great of Prussia, had come to the conclusion that Britain could not win. Rumors of peace were in the air, rumors which came strangely to the ears of the British commanders, Clinton in New York and Cornwallis in Virginia.

Their military position, they felt, had never been stronger. Washington's little army on the Hudson was held together purely by the personality of the commander. Unpaid, ill armed, badly clothed and provisioned almost by the grace of God, Washington's Continental Army was incapable of delivering a major blow. His war chest was so low that he was unable to find a few shillings to pay a courier on a horse for carrying a message a distance of a few miles.

In Virginia, Cornwallis and Phillips could ravage the land as they wished, and the cities of Virginia, along its many rivers, lay under a pall of blue smoke from the thousands of hogsheads of tobacco burned by the Redcoats. Burning tobacco was like burning money, for the only source of cash for the United States of America was Virginia tobacco sold abroad.

Opposing the British in Virginia for a while was "the boy"

Lafayette. He danced between the two armies of Cornwallis and Phillips like a gadfly between two bulls, capable of doing no more than irritating them. Down to the succor of Lafayette at last came "Mad" Anthony Wayne leading a few thousand veterans of the Pennsylvania line. Then came news that changed all this. Washington learned that the French fleet had left the West Indies and was headed for the Capes of the Chesapeake. With a prayer that he might not be too late, Washington withdrew from New York and headed south, gathering his French allies on the way and hoping to be able to hem Cornwallis in between the land and the sea at a little hamlet few but Virginians had ever heard of called Yorktown.

But before this mighty change in the military picture took place Adams and Franklin, through the mediation of Russia and Germany, were in touch with the British Court and Parliament, which was anxious for an end to the war.

The Congress was fully aware of these negotiations and voted that four delegates be sent to join Adams in negotiating a peace between the United States and Great Britain. One of the men that Congress picked for this work was Tom Jefferson. Samuel Huntington wrote a letter to Jefferson informing him of his appointment and the letter was brought to him at Monticello through Lafayette's headquarters.

This appointment came at the time in June of 1781 when Jefferson had been stunned by the news that an investigation was to be held into his last twelve months as Governor of Virginia. Jefferson could not accept the appointment. He discussed it many times with Martha, but in the end his high sense of honor forbade him, as he saw it, to run away from the inquiry even in the service of his country. He took almost a month replying to the Congress and turned down the appointment because of "circumstances which take from me the right of accepting so desirable an office."

Lafayette had pleaded with him to go to France and Jefferson dearly wanted to go. French excellence in architecture, in literature and in science appealed enormously to him. But he wrote to Lafayette that all his efforts as Governor "have not been such as to give satisfaction to some of my countrymen and it has become necessary for me to remain in the state. . . ."

Others also pleaded with Jefferson to go to France. He was needed there, they said, and they well knew that the charges against him were merely a political smear. But he would not go. He had to defend himself and, even beyond this, he desperately needed to live quietly for a while with his family. Edmund Randolph, delegate from Virginia to the Continental Congress, wrote bitterly to Jefferson, "I was much distressed . . . to find your irrevocable purpose of sequestering yourself to public life. If you can justify this resolution to yourself, I am confident that you cannot to the world."

Still Jefferson would not go. Martha was ill, and he was afraid for her. Indeed something had gone out of Jefferson in his two years as Governor. The burning of the land, the slaughtering of horses and cattle, the bloody destruction of all natural things which is warfare at firsthand had profoundly shaken him. He needed the quietness and strength of the earth, the peace of the trees to make him whole again. So at Monticello, while Cornwallis retreated toward Yorktown and the diplomats exchanged their cunning notes concerning peace, Jefferson went on with the building of his house, went for rides with Patsy, laid out more gardens, experimented with fertilizers and turned himself to the whole purpose for which the war had been fought—the decent peaceful living of a free citizen.

Earlier in the year the Marquis François de Barbe-Marbois, who was secretary of the French legation in Philadelphia, had addressed to Jefferson a long letter containing a lot of questions about Virginia. This letter Jefferson, busy with all the affairs of the war, had not had time to answer. Now he turned to answering it and he decided that in his answer he would give all the information concerning Virginia that lay at his disposal. He would deal with its plants and its native animals, its geography and its geology, its history, its Indians and its laws. In short, to answer a letter he would write a book. The book would restore his inner strength.

The book became known as *Notes on Virginia.* In it, after painstaking research and a quantity of reading sufficient for a modern college course, Jefferson spoke of such matters as how far the Nansemond River is navigable for a vessel of 250 tons, how long it takes to go by boat from the mouth of the Ohio to

the mouth of the Mississippi, the height of the Natural Bridge—a natural arch over a river which Jefferson owned and which he regarded as "the sublimest of Nature's works"—the weights of deer and of hogs, the height of horses and the kinds of turtles and snakes and lizards to be found in the sprawling area then called Virginia. He included notes of maximum and minimum temperatures in Virginia in different seasons of the year, for during all his troubles he had rarely failed to get up at dawn and read his thermometer.

A great French naturalist, the Count de Buffon, had produced a work in which he made the curious claim that the animals of North America were smaller than those of Europe. Jefferson set out to inquire into the truth of this statement and soon had notes on an American hog that weighed 1,000 pounds and buffalo that weighed nearly two tons and a buck that weighed an astonishing 3,800 pounds.

In his zeal to set the facts right, Jefferson wrote to his friend, George Rogers Clark, out in the Virginia wilderness, asking to be sent specimens of bones of any animals which were unusual. ". . . There is no expense of package or safe transportation which I will not gladly reimburse to procure them safely," Jefferson wrote. "Elk horns of very extraordinary size or anything else uncommon would be very acceptable."

Jefferson had heard of massive bones being discovered in some of the frontier territories—the bones of mastodons and other prehistoric creatures which had once thundered through the tremendous forests of the North American continent. He wanted George Rogers Clark to send him some of these if he should find them. But the frontiersman had his eye on the Indians and his stores of powder and shot and hadn't time to send his friend Tom Jefferson elk horns or mastodon bones.

Jefferson later turned to General John Sullivan of New Hampshire, a big, loyal but quick-tempered Irishman whose criticism of the French had embarrassed the Franco-American alliance during the war. Jefferson asked Sullivan whether he could get him the head and hide of a big moose to show to the Count de Buffon. Sullivan, who was a man of action, organized a hunting expedition, killed the biggest moose he could find, cut a road through twenty-four miles of snow to get the moose out, stuffed

it, added the horns of five great deer and shipped the whole thing at a monstrous cost to Tom Jefferson.

Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, begun as an answer to a French marquis, were published later as a book, and copies were eagerly sought throughout Europe and are used by scholars to this day. He began the work in June of 1781 and finished in December of the same year.

When the book was finished, Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown, the war was over and Jefferson felt his troubles were at an end. He had divorced himself from public affairs, he wanted to do nothing more than devote himself to his family, his music, his horses and science. He spent Christmas with his relatives, the Randolphs, at Tuckahoe and by New Year's Day of 1782 was back at Monticello, looking forward to a future of happiness in his home.

25

For the first few months of the year 1782, Thomas Jefferson lived in complete serenity. He was still a member of the House of Delegates of the Virginia legislature, but he did not attend any of the sessions. His fellow delegates, somewhat ashamed of the way they had mistreated him, excused him. Jefferson worked away at the building and planning of Monticello, laying out more and more vegetable and flower plots and reading all he could lay his hands on concerning architecture and horticulture.

The building of the great mansion went slowly. The war had cut off all imports of building materials. Nails were more precious than coins. Glass was not to be obtained, nor paint either. It was possible to go ahead only with some of the brickwork, and Tom Jefferson had employed as a bricklayer a deserter from the British army. The man worked well and Jefferson encouraged him in his plans to settle in America.

When spring came, bringing the blossoming of the cherries and the peaches to which Jefferson always looked forward, he

cut sprays of flowers and brought them into the house. Martha was expecting a baby and was not well. He filled her room with flowers to cheer her up. The baby was born on May 8 and was christened Lucy Elizabeth—the second daughter of that name born to the Jeffersons. The first had died a little while previously.

Martha did not recover from childbirth. She could not leave her bed after the baby was born, and as the weeks went by lost strength daily. The doctor was at Monticello constantly and Jefferson remained by his wife's side day and night. His sister, Martha Carr, came to keep house for him. Jefferson would allow no one to feed his wife but himself. He could coax her to take a spoonful of broth, try to raise her spirits by talking of Patsy and the garden. She fought hard for life but she lost the battle and died on the morning of September 6, 1782.

Jefferson was not with her at the moment of death. He had been by her side for so long that he was in a daze and his sister led him away to the library to rest on a bed he had installed there. She came back a few moments later to tell him that Martha had died. He stared at her in utter disbelief and then toppled to the floor unconscious. For some time he remained in a coma, and when the doctor revived him, he asked everyone to leave him alone and shut the library door. All night long he walked up and down from one end of the library to the other without a pause. For three weeks he would not leave the room nor speak to anyone. He had to be forced to eat. When he was not lying exhausted on the bed, he walked backward and forward over the floor of the library.

It was little Patsy who brought him around. She was just ten years of age. She took over the job of bringing him his food and would not leave the room but would sit quietly with him until he had eaten everything.

She did not bother him with talk but now and then she would mention something she thought important that he would like to hear—like the pumpkins getting bigger and the apples in the orchard that were so big she couldn't get her two hands around them.

She sensed that if he stayed in the library he would die, but if she could get him out he would live. Finally she coaxed him outside to see the leaves turning on the oaks and maples and

beeches. She had it all arranged. She took his hand and led him out into the garden. She had had a horse saddled and Tom Jefferson looked at it dumbly and climbed into the saddle. Patsy's pony was saddled too and she mounted also. Without a word, Jefferson headed his hunter over the lonely mountain trails around Monticello, Patsy following on her pony.

When they came back from the ride, Patsy told her aunt, Mrs. Carr, "Papa is going to get well. But we are going to have to ride a lot." She knew that it was in the mountains and among the trees that Tom Jefferson would find life again.

That evening Thomas Jefferson took his first meal outside the library since his wife's death, and in the weeks that followed he gradually overcame his despair and turned to the business of his household.

Patsy was a high-spirited girl and not too careful about her dress. She normally put on whatever clothes came to hand without seeing that the ribbons were ironed and the lace fresh. But during the ordeal of her father's grief she dressed very carefully every day and supervised the servants when they dressed her four-year-old sister, Polly. She had been born in the midst of the war on August 1, 1778.

Meanwhile, though the war was at an end, the peace had not yet been concluded. Thomas Jefferson's name was constantly mentioned in the Congress as a man who should be sent to Europe to take part in the peace negotiations. James Madison, who was one of the delegates from Virginia to the Congress, was plagued with questions on whether Jefferson would accept the appointment which he had previously turned down.

Madison wondered whether Jefferson would not—now that his wife was dead—want to leave Monticello and his memories for a while and bury himself in public affairs. He hinted to the members of the Congress that this might be so. Jefferson then was reappointed by a unanimous vote of the Congress as one of the ministers to negotiate the peace with Britain. As soon as the vote was taken, Madison wrote to Edmund Randolph in Richmond asking him to tell Jefferson the news ahead of the official notification. "Tell him that the appointment was unanimous, without a single adverse remark," Madison wrote, for he feared

that Jefferson might still be resentful of the public criticism of his term as Governor.

Congress was so anxious to secure for the nation the services of Jefferson that when Robert R. Livingston, the Secretary of State, resigned at the same time, it was suggested that if Jefferson did not want to go to France as a peace delegate, he might become Secretary of State of the United States. And so Jefferson was offered two of the highest positions in the national services: Secretary of State or Minister Plenipotentiary to France.

This time he was not long making up his mind; he put his grief firmly aside and replied to the Congress that he would be honored to accept the appointment as one of the ministers for negotiating peace with Britain.

First, however, he took his three little daughters, Patsy, Polly and the baby Lucy, to be inoculated against smallpox. Such inoculation was comparatively new in Jefferson's day and many held that it was harmful. But Jefferson had made his own inquiries and decided that children should be inoculated. He took them to the house of his friend, Colonel Archibald Cary, for the inoculation. When they had recovered, Polly and Lucy were taken to Eppington to another of Jefferson's sisters, Mrs. Elizabeth Eppes.

But Tom Jefferson took Patsy with him to Philadelphia. She was his little companion now and he would take her about the world and enjoy with her all the sights that were to be seen. Jefferson and Patsy went to put up at the Indian Queen Tavern in Philadelphia. Patsy had never seen so many people and so many carriages in all her life. Furthermore, she had never seen any shops and she was entranced by the windows with all the marvelous trinkets behind them and demanded to be bought ribbons and brooches and toffee apples and other delights that took her fancy. Jefferson spent the first few days taking Patsy around the city, and the great men of the nation who were all his friends came very near to spoiling the daughter of the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence.

After that Tom Jefferson got seriously to business. He had called on Madison as soon as he arrived in Philadelphia, and told him that he couldn't jump into the middle of the peace negotiations without having at his disposal all the information to date.

"I was aware of that," said Madison with a smile, "and I was prepared for it." He handed Jefferson a portfolio of papers—letters, minutes of meetings, memoranda, estimates on imports and exports and revenues to be derived from them, and so on. Jefferson started his reading and in four days had mastered all these details.

He had expected to be in Philadelphia only ten days before sailing to France. But the French frigate, *Romulus,* on which he was to leave was not ready to go, and ice had forced her to anchor twelve miles down the bay.

Jefferson hired a boat and tried to get through the ice to the frigate. The tide came in, jamming the ice floes up the river, and the boat could neither go backward nor forward. He and Patsy were rescued by a sloop which battered its way through the ice and took them to the *Romulus.*

The *Romulus* was under the command of the Chevalier de Villebrun. "Well, sir," said Jefferson when he got aboard, "here I am and perhaps now we can sail."

"Impossible," said the Frenchman. "The British may have surrendered at Yorktown but for them the war is not over. There is a ship of sixty-four guns, four ships of fifty guns, two of forty guns outside the bay—all of the British navy and all determined that the *Romulus* will not leave this bay. I trust you will not find me lacking in courage if I suggest that the odds are more than we should face."

"Cannot we ask for a flag of truce to permit us to leave?" asked Jefferson.

"That might detract from the dignity of your country," said the Chevalier. "You do not ask a flag of truce from a nation whose army has recently surrendered to you."

So there it was. Jefferson and Patsy were isolated on a frigate blockaded by the British in a freezing bay. The quarters on board were cramped and the food abominable. Jefferson wrote to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs asking for advice and received the reply that, in view of the circumstances, he should not go to France until he received renewed instructions.

Jefferson left the frigate and went to Baltimore, taking lodgings with a Mrs. Langston. Time hung heavy on his hands. Baltimore provided little intellectual exercise or amusements. He

took Patsy to a play and walked around the city with her, doing a little shopping and sight-seeing, and finally returned to Philadelphia. There he waited until April before the Congress decided that it was not necessary for him to go to France, for the peace negotiations were already well advanced. With considerable relief, Jefferson returned to Monticello.

Back at Monticello spring was in full bloom and Jefferson set out some seeds he had gathered while in Baltimore. There wasn't much he could do about building on the house, for materials were still not available. He turned his mind to remodeling the Constitution of Virginia with which he had never been satisfied. There were rumors in the air that a convention would be called for this purpose and this time Jefferson wanted to have his say in full. He drew up a complete new Constitution for the state and one of the provisions was that a Governor should be elected for five years instead of one and should be given the power necessary to execute the laws of the state. He remembered only too well his own experience as Governor when all responsibility was laid at his door but without the authority to carry through his various plans.

The whole militia of the state, he urged, should be subject to the Governor's directions, though the execution of those orders should be the responsibility of military officers. Jefferson sent a copy of his proposed constitution to Madison in Philadelphia. But the convention he hoped for was never called.

In June of that year Jefferson was once more elected to the United States Congress, which was to reconvene in November. At this time the Congress was so unpopular with the people that it was almost in hiding. Shortly after Jefferson's election a body of mutinous soldiers demanding their pay had marched on Philadelphia and driven the Congress, which was at its wits' end to find money, in full flight to Princeton.

Jefferson set out for Princeton to take his seat, but the Congress, still fleeing from unpaid soldiers, had left. He finally caught up with it in Annapolis where it had taken refuge from the unpaid troops.

It was not the fault of the Congress that the soldiers were unpaid. The Congress had been given the job of running the United States, but without the authority or machinery to raise taxes or enforce its wishes. All the states agreed that the Congress

must have the right to tax but each was afraid of contributing more than its neighbor. Again all the states were agreed that there must be a central government. But they were each determined that that central government should not infringe on what they regarded as their own rights. The problem of states' rights versus federal control is as old as the United States of America.

Jefferson took one problem with him to Annapolis which he was determined to solve. Virginia owned vast areas in the West comprising the whole of modern Kentucky and Ohio. Tom Jefferson had often talked of the future of this area with George Rogers Clark. He had talked a great deal about it with members of the Virginia legislature. He secured the agreement of all concerned to hand over the whole of these vast western provinces of Virginia to the Congress so that they might be developed into separate states and not be held back by Virginia.

With the deed ceding these lands, which were known as the Northwest Territory, went a map in which Jefferson carved out fourteen distinct states in the vast area. He named every one of them and their names were somewhat outlandish and caused chuckles among the Congressmen.

There were names such as Cherronesus, Assenisipia and Pelisipia. These referred to Indian tribes, for Tom Jefferson believed strongly that the Indians should not be ignored and all their treasured traditions forgotten. Other names were a little more acceptable: names such as Michigania and Illinoia. His string of new states extended from west of Lake Superior in the north to the territory which lay between the Mississippi and Georgia in the south. In proposing that they be organized, Jefferson laid down one important principle. The new states should be closed to slavery after 1800.

Congress did not act immediately on this proposal. However, in 1787 it enacted the Northwest Ordinance, which stated that no man born in the Northwest Territory, irrespective of his race, should be a slave. Tom Jefferson had by his vision pushed the area of freedom in the United States of America over thousands of square miles.

While he was attending to all this, he was still concerned about his three little daughters. The two younger ones, Polly and Lucy, he continued to leave with his sister, Mrs. Eppes.

Patsy he now took from Monticello to Philadelphia where she

could be schooled as became a young lady. She was to have dancing lessons and music lessons and drawing lessons. It was very hard for him to part with Patsy. She was a bright and cheerful girl and was able to make him laugh even in the worst of his worries. Her cheerfulness at times disturbed her father, who was quite sure that she would not study hard. He spoke to the Marquis de Marbois, the French minister in Philadelphia, about getting someone to teach Patsy French.

"I calculate the odds at about fourteen to one that Patsy will marry a blockhead," Jefferson said. And the Marquis laughed.

"My good sir," he replied, "a similar calculation has been made by every father in considering the matrimonial prospects of an attractive daughter."

But to be sure that Patsy didn't marry a blockhead, Jefferson wrote her a great number of letters and in one of them set out the schedule she should follow every day. It went like this: From eight to ten each morning she was to practice music. From ten to one she was to dance one day and draw the next. From one to two she was to draw on the day she danced and presumably dance on the day she drew. From three to four she was to read French and from four to five she was to practice her music again and from five to bedtime she was to read English and practice writing.

When Patsy got this letter she sighed and shook her head. It was very hard being the daughter of Tom Jefferson. There was no time allowed for breakfast, lunch or dinner, or going for a walk, or playing, or coaxing her governess into taking her shopping. In fact there was no time at all for living, only time for working.

She did not follow the schedule. She was staying with Mrs. Thomas Hopkinson, mother of Francis Hopkinson, who was a friend of Jefferson. The good lady was sixty-five years of age and no match for Patsy. Mrs. Trist, a family friend, saw Patsy a few times and wrote to Jefferson saying that she was "very hearty" and hinting that she wasn't too particular about her clothes. Furthermore her drawing teacher, a Frenchman, was having trouble getting Patsy to draw the cubes and cylinders and spheres which were the basis of art instruction in those days.

Jefferson wrote his daughter on all these subjects. He told her

she must be tidy and clean in her dress and never wear anything that was soiled. He could write with ease about the rights of man but lecturing his daughter on the charms of women made him awkward.

"Some ladies think they may, under the privileges of deshabille, be loose and negligent in their dress in the morning," he wrote, "but be you from the moment you rise till you go to bed as cleanly and properly dressed as at the hour of dinner or tea. . . . I hope therefore the moment you rise from bed your first work will be to dress yourself in such style as you may be seen by any gentleman without his being able to discover a pin amiss, or any other circumstance of neatness wanting."

He concluded his letter by writing, "If you love me then, strive to be good under every situation and to all living creatures. . . ."

To free the slaves, to establish a true democracy in the United States, to breed new plants and improve the agriculture of the nation, to study the stars, to provide for the expansion of America to the coast of the Pacific and to bring up three daughters—these were the tasks of Thomas Jefferson. The last he sometimes found the most difficult.

26

In the days before Independence there was always a shortage of real money in the colonies. English money had a habit of getting back to England, and indeed many of the planters and traders of colonial days carried on their business by barter and credit. They shipped their goods to English merchants who shipped them goods in return or entered a credit of a certain value for them in their books.

The colonies of course could not mint coins or issue money of their own. Spanish dollars flowed in to mix with English pounds to make up the currency shortage, and Tom Jefferson, journeying from Virginia to Philadelphia, paid his way from a purse

which contained English pounds and shillings, Spanish dollars, Dutch guilders and French louis d'or.

With the outbreak of the Revolution, the confused currency situation became impossible. All trade with England had ceased, credits dried up, bills went unpaid and many a soldier fought through the war without receiving any regular payment out of which to support his family. With the coming of peace, it was essential to establish a currency for the United States of America. The Continental Congress had appointed a committee in 1776 to establish relative values of the different kinds of coins in circulation in the thirteen colonies. Three weeks after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson had been added to that committee which was led by Robert Morris, one of the wealthiest of Philadelphia's merchants.

Robert Morris was so well known in France and in England as a reliable businessman that his word alone was worth a credit of thousands of pounds. During the Revolutionary War he pledged his word to obtain arms, gunpowder and clothing for the Continental soldiers time and time again. Where French merchants might be unwilling to lend money to the United States of America, they would lend it to Robert Morris. He emerged from the war ruined—his whole trade gone, his ships sunk, his warehouses empty and in ruins. At one time he was imprisoned for debt. George Washington visited him in a debtor's prison to console him and promise him all the help he could to straighten his affairs.

This was the man then who, with Tom Jefferson and others, tackled the maze of American currency. Morris wanted to establish a currency based on a decimal system and Jefferson heartily supported him. The early report the Morris committee turned in to the Continental Congress was put aside. In 1782, however, the problem arose again, and the Congress, in hiding from soldiers who had been paid with printing press money, asked Morris and Jefferson once more to look into the question. Morris drew up an elaborate statement in which he proposed the establishing of a unit of money based on the amount of pure silver in a penny. This unit would be 1/1440 part of a Spanish dollar or 1/1600 of the Crown sterling.

When Jefferson saw this his head was in a whirl. He got pen

and paper and worked out the price of a loaf of bread at seventy-two of Morris' units; the price of a horse could not be expressed without using six figures. "Heavens," he said to Morris, "pity the poor farmer buying a bullock and selling a load of hay. He would be two weeks trying to find whether he had made a profit or a loss."

"See what *you* can do," said Morris. "The essential thing is to find a basic unit which will not disrupt whatever currency we have now."

Jefferson asked for a copy of Morris' plan, but those to whom they had been sent had put their copies aside as too muddling for their brains and all were lost. Tom Jefferson took out his writing desk and started to do some figuring.

He decided a bigger unit was needed and hit upon the dollar. One-tenth of the dollar was to be called a dime, and one-hundredth part of a dollar would be a penny. He put his ideas together in a paper which he entitled "Notes on the Establishment of a Money Unit and of a Coinage for the United States." Robert Morris liked his plan but suggested some changes which Jefferson did not like. Jefferson printed his notes and circulated them to all the members of the Congress. They were finally agreed on and thus was brought into being the simple and efficient American currency which we use today.

On May 7, 1784, a great change occurred in Tom Jefferson's life. In the morning a letter arrived from Benjamin Franklin in Paris saying that John Jay, one of the commissioners appointed to negotiate the peace with England which had now been concluded, was returning to the United States. The news had hardly arrived before the members of the Congress decided they must send someone else to France to join John Adams and Benjamin Franklin in negotiating treaties of commerce with the European powers. Tom Jefferson was elected for this mission.

Jefferson was delighted. He had twice been deprived of an opportunity of going to France and now he was at last to have his chance. The Congress was still at Annapolis when he received this appointment; he immediately started paying his bills and writing letters to his friends, saying that he was to leave for

Europe. He arrived in Philadelphia, went immediately to Patsy and told her that they were to go to Paris together.

"*Magnifique, Papa,*" cried Patsy, thus assuring her father at one and the same time that she had been studying her French and was delighted at the prospect of going to France.

Jefferson, to celebrate, took her to a play that night and a little later to see a balloon ascension. Balloons were all the rage in Philadelphia. In France, a year before, Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier had sent a hot-air balloon up a great distance and it had come down one and a half miles from its launching site. Every man of learning in America had details of this first ascension of a balloon from friends in France. Experiments with balloons were started immediately in Philadelphia, and Jefferson had received a letter from the Chevalier Luzerne describing how a balloon had gone up 300 feet with a man aboard and had come down six miles away after a flight of twenty minutes.

Jefferson's friend, Francis Hopkinson, was experimenting with balloons made of paper. One was sent up from the garden of the Minister of Holland and another from the garden of Robert Morris. Jefferson had to see such a marvel and he took Patsy with him and paid fifteen shillings for the privilege. He watched three balloons rise, the largest of them eight feet in diameter. It went up 300 feet. He dashed off to see James Monroe, now a lawyer, to tell him all about it and immediately started to study aeronautics.

"These balloons or something like them will change the world," Jefferson told Hopkinson. "For one thing fortresses can be destroyed by them and fleets of ships too, unless they can find some way of defending themselves from attacks from the air. More than that, inland countries will now be able to ship their goods by air and I believe the day will come when merchandise and people will travel from country to country on the wind. Mark what I say. We shall one day soar sublime above the clouds." He wished for a balloon himself and reckoned that if he had one he would be able to get from Philadelphia to Monticello in five hours instead of ten days.

Packing for France and making a last tour of Philadelphia's shops, Jefferson spotted outside the door of a hatter's shop a large panther's skin. In he went, determined to buy it.

"Whatever do you want with that, Papa?" Patsy asked, for she

felt, being the woman of the family, that she should keep an eye on her father's spending.

"I'm going to take it to Monsieur Buffon in Paris," said Jefferson. "He says that there are no panthers in America but only cougars. I am going to prove him wrong." The panther's skin cost Jefferson sixteen dollars.

"That's rather a lot of money just to prove the gentleman is wrong," said Patsy.

"In establishing truth," replied her father, "money is no consideration at all." He made one further payment before leaving America, giving seventeen pounds ten shillings to Francis Hopkinson to give to an artist in return for a portrait of George Washington. He took the portrait with him to Paris.

Jefferson was determined to see as much of America as he could before leaving for Europe. He had visited only Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania and decided he must certainly see the New England states and visit New York.

New York was as much of a fascination for him as it is for a tourist today. He couldn't resist the shops and spent six days in the city buying books and maps and sets of chessmen and a hat, until Patsy wondered how they were going to get all that luggage over to France.

Jefferson wouldn't leave without calling on Ezra Stiles, the president of Yale College. Stiles pumped him for all the information he could get about Virginia and particularly about the College of William and Mary at Williamsburg whose curriculum Jefferson had done a great deal to reform. Stiles was horrified to learn that a student did not have to know any Latin or Greek to get into William and Mary. Yale required such knowledge. He was excited when Jefferson told him of the huge bones which had been recently dug up in Ohio. Jefferson himself owned a thigh bone three feet long and a tooth that weighed sixteen pounds.

Indeed Jefferson's interest in these huge bones was soon to gain for him the nickname of "Mastodon Tom." From New York Jefferson went to Hartford, Norwich, New London, Newport, Providence and Boston. Everywhere he discussed local government, the price of labor, the state of shipbuilding and fishing, exports and imports, determined that when he arrived in France

he could speak with authority about his country. Finally he sailed on a newly built ship, the *Ceres*, from Boston on July 5. But before he went aboard, he bought some apples and oranges and to these purchases Patsy raised no objection.

27

WHEN republican Thomas Jefferson sailed for Europe, two powerful kings were passing through a critical period of their reigns. King George III of England, a man whom Jefferson all his life regarded as a tyrant, was thinking of abdicating his throne. King Louis XVI of France had discharged his brilliant adviser Necker and in effect handed over his powers to his Queen Marie Antoinette, who was gay and frivolous and empty-headed. He remained King but was ruled by his queen and her self-seeking advisers.

King George III was a simple stubborn man whom his subjects liked and called "Farmer George." He delighted to go about the countryside in a plain coach and talk over the weather and the condition of the crops with any farmer he met. He loved his queen and his children and with the loss of the colonies believed he had failed his country. And so he drafted a speech to be presented to Parliament announcing his decision to resign the throne. His ministers persuaded him not to resign.

George's decision not to resign was followed by so many troubles that he finally went mad. Louis' decision to leave more and more of his affairs in the hands of his Queen resulted in his being beheaded.

But these two events were still some years in the future, undreamed of when Thomas Jefferson and his daughter Patsy, now twelve years of age, arrived in France after a pleasant journey across the Atlantic. Their ship had been becalmed for two days off the Newfoundland banks. With sunny weather and no wind, Tom Jefferson and Patsy joined the passengers and crew in fishing for cod. They got plenty of them, so many indeed that

they ate only the best parts of the fish and threw the rest overboard, for there was no salt with which to preserve them.

The ship went first to Portsmouth, England, where they rested a week so Patsy could get over the effects of the voyage. Then they went to Paris where Jefferson got rooms in the Hotel d'Orleans while he looked for a house. The house he finally obtained was one of the finest in Paris; it belonged to the Count L'Avongeac. It had extensive gardens and a court and a great number of rooms and it was soon thronged with the nobility of France, who came to pay their respects to the writer of the Declaration of Independence.

The French nobility were intrigued at the intelligence of the Americans. First there was Franklin, one of the great natural scientists of his day. Then John Adams, whose knowledge of law was second to no man's and who could carry on a conversation in French or Latin or Greek. And now here was Jefferson, master of half a dozen languages, expert on music, painting, architecture, agriculture, law, botany, geology and indeed on any subject to which the conversation might turn. What kind of people was this nation producing? they wondered. Lafayette, back in France, tried to explain the Americans to his countrymen. They were a new kind of man, he said, who called no one master and regarded freedom as the most precious possession a man could obtain.

Some of the French were a little jealous of these talented Americans, among them the Abbé Raynal. The abbé's favorite theory was that both animals and men degenerated in America. They tended to grow shorter and shorter with each generation and their minds became poorer and poorer.

Ben Franklin kept his house at Passy in the suburbs of Paris and one day invited a company to dinner, half Americans and half Frenchmen. The abbé was among the Frenchmen. The Americans were seated on one side of the table and the French on the other. During the dinner the abbé could not resist bringing up his theory about the degeneracy of men and beasts in America. Wise old Ben Franklin listened to him carefully but with a twinkle in his eye.

"*Monsieur l'abbé,*" he said, "let us put your theory to the test. Here we have one half Americans, one half Frenchmen and, by good fortune for our experiment, they are seated on opposite

sides of the table. If all will stand up, we will soon see whether the Americans have degenerated." The whole company arose. Among the Americans there were three men who were over six feet tall. None of the Frenchmen topped five feet ten inches and the abbé himself was very short.

"Well," said the abbé, "there are exceptions to every rule."

"Monsieur," said Franklin, "in America, I assure you, exceptions are the rule."

Jefferson was delighted to be meeting Ben Franklin again and spent a great deal of time with the wise elderly philosopher who, eight short years before, had sat beside him consoling him while the Congress went over every word of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin, Jefferson knew, never tried to teach anything directly. He got all his messages over by little anecdotes, and Jefferson listened carefully while the doctor told him humorous tales of the people of Paris and the French Court.

"You will perhaps meet," said Dr. Franklin, "a certain Count Falkenstein. He is often here at my house. Never make the mistake of calling him sire."

"Why should I give him such a title?" asked Jefferson.

"It is his proper title," said Franklin. "He is actually the Emperor Joseph II of Austria."

"And why does he come to Paris as Count Falkenstein?" asked Jefferson.

"Even kings get tired of being kings," said Franklin. "He has done a great deal to free the people of his country from serfdom but he makes the mistake that all kings tend to make—he thinks *he* is the law."

Franklin and Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, schooled Jefferson in the ways of the French court. He learned fast and observed the curious customs of the court, but he never agreed with them and was horrified at the condition of the mass of the French people who lived in terrible poverty.

He learned to carry, when visiting a French nobleman, a very small hat. Franklin explained to him that he was never to put this on. It was to be held in the crook of the left arm. He was not to sit down in a French salon but to engage in conversation with one or two others while standing or walking briskly up and down the

drawing room—always with the little hat in the crook of his arm.

Jefferson found it almost impossible to work in his fine house in Paris. There were callers at all hours of the day and they stayed until late in the evening. He had noted in his walks around the town a Carthusian monastery on Mount Calvary. He discovered that he could rent a room there for a small fee. He rented such a room and had with it the use of the gardens. The monks were forbidden to talk except when necessary and so a serene silence prevailed through the gardens and the monastery itself. It was here that Thomas Jefferson went when he had serious work to do and wanted to get away from his visitors. He became friendly with the monks and even envied their life of devotion and meditation. He invited several of them to visit him in his fine townhouse and the abbot became so fond of him that he presented him with an ivory broom which had been made by one of the monks.

Lafayette was the one to whom all the Americans turned when they needed instructions in the etiquette of the French court itself.

"You must learn about knocking on doors," Lafayette told Jefferson before his first visit to the palace of Versailles. "Or rather you must learn about *not* knocking on doors. At the court it is the height of bad manners to knock on a door. You must scratch on it with your fingernail."

"Any particular fingernail?" asked Jefferson with a smile.

"Oh yes," said Lafayette, "that of the little finger of the left hand which should grow long for the purpose."

"You're joking," said Jefferson.

"I'm deadly serious," said Lafayette. "You will be judged on these matters. There are other refinements too. When you make your first call on any of the great houses around the town, you do not scratch on the door, you knock."

"Excellent," said Jefferson. "I knock the first time and scratch afterwards."

"Not at all," said Lafayette. "The scratching is reserved for Versailles. The second time you call on a nobleman you give one blow of the knocker. No more. Two is regarded as outrageous bad manners. And you must learn how to behave in the presence

of the King's dinner. You may be at Versailles when it is brought through the corridors. You must immediately bow low, sweeping the ground with your hat and murmur reverently, '*La viande du Roi?*' (The King's food?).

"You already know that you must stand in the presence of the King," Lafayette continued, "but please bear in mind that you must also stand in the presence of the King's messenger, or the messenger of any man whose rank is higher than yours."

Jefferson marveled at the ceremony that surrounded the King of France. He found Louis XVI a good-natured and amiable man, but weak and utterly unaware of the condition in which his subjects lived. Louis liked to hunt and regarded that day lost on which he had not shot something. He also liked making locks, but he didn't like reading or anything that called for mental work.

He was awakened every morning at eight by a curious procession of servants. The first of these were the royal faggot bearers who came in to light the King's fire in winter. They were followed by the King's watchmaker who came in to wind the King's watch. Then came the royal wigmaker and from a huge assortment of wigs—walking wigs, sitting wigs, hunting wigs, council wigs and thinking wigs—he selected two, one to be worn while the King was dressing, the other while he had his breakfast. At this point the King was not yet out of bed. He was awakened on the stroke of eight by his valet and through the huge palace of Versailles the exciting whisper spread, "The King is awake." The courtiers had to wait to see the King while the King's physician and the King's surgeon and the King's nurse came in to see if the sovereign was well. The two doctors rubbed him down and changed his shirt for him. And when the King was at last clad in a long shirt, the Grand Chamberlain opened the doors of the anteroom and in bustled the courtiers, their silks rustling like corn in the wind, all pretending the greatest eagerness to get a glimpse of their newly awakened sovereign which would support them through their day ahead. The courtiers were soon put out while the King said a few prayers. But they were readmitted to watch him put on his dressing gown and wig and later a larger throng entered to watch the King put on his trousers. They always commented on how cleverly he managed this.

So the whole ceremony of the King's dressing and the King's

breakfast went on. He washed his face in water mixed with spirits of wine and shaved every other day for shaving was too painful to be undertaken daily.

Jefferson was disgusted when he contrasted the shallowness, elegance and astonishing waste at the King's court with the grinding poverty of the people of Paris and France generally. The people lived in tottering hovels on which no building had been done in a century or more. Some of the houses they occupied, if they could be called houses, were windowless and the roofs consisted of any kind of rubbish that could be put up to keep out the weather.

Sewage flowed down the streets in an odious glittering stream, horrid with offal and the corpses of cats and dogs. Chamberpots were emptied with impunity from upper windows with a cry of "*Garde-toi*" (watch yourself) to warn anyone who might be passing below. Some of the streets were paved with cobblestones, but the wretched people had dug up the cobbles in many places to try to repair the hovels they lived in. The resulting potholes broke wheels and axles of carts and carriages that rumbled over them. Sewage water collected in these holes and little children, thin as sticks, played in these foul pools, in rags which bore not the slightest resemblance to clothing. They were called "*sans culotte*"—"people without trousers"—and the description was apt. These wretches, who rarely ate a full meal and who drank putrid water or worse wine, together with their brothers in the countryside supported with their taxes the luxury of the Court and of the nobility.

Jefferson was not long in Paris before he wrote a letter to Mrs. Trist in Philadelphia, who had helped take care of Patsy. "Of twenty million people supposed to be in France," he said, "I am of the opinion there are nineteen millions more wretched, more accursed in every circumstance of human existence, than the most conspicuously wretched individual of the whole United States."

He knew that such conditions could not continue, that human nature would not tolerate them. So did his friends among the nobility. These same nobles, whose own subjects were so wretched, had heartily supported the American Revolution against England's rule. To be sure, as Jefferson knew, much of

their support came from France's centuries-long enmity toward England. But some of it came from a genuine love of liberty and many of them were deeply concerned about the condition of their own people.

But what was to be done to alter matters? That was the great question. In their perplexity the French intellectuals naturally turned to Jefferson and to Franklin and John Adams, who had been in the fore in producing the American Revolution. But all three were ministers in a foreign country where they dared not interfere with internal affairs. They had to be careful of what they said.

Jefferson advised working for little gains, little improvements in government which, added year after year, would finally result in the liberation of the French people. But the people of France had before them the glittering and astonishing success of the American Revolution. The intelligentsia and the nobility might be prepared to take Jefferson's advice and slowly remake their government. The starving people of Paris and the French countryside were not. Jefferson noted something curious about them. When he stopped to ask a man his name, he would reply, "Jacques."

"And your friend?"

"Jacques."

"And this man here?"

"Jacques."

"They are all Jacques," said Jefferson to Lafayette later.

"Yes," replied the young nobleman grimly. "A common name and a common cause."

28

BEN FRANKLIN, when Jefferson arrived in Paris, was not well. John Adams had been in Holland and returned to France. Franklin wanted to return to his homeland although he had some doubts about leaving John Adams as Minister to France, for

Adams distrusted the French who in return were not warm to him. But before Franklin could leave, the treaty of commerce, for which Jefferson had been sent to France, had to be negotiated, not merely with France but with all European nations who could be persuaded to sign it.

The treaty, drafted by the Congress, contained many of Jefferson's ideas on international trade. He believed that trade should be free—each country selling to the other, without import taxes, whatever it best produced. But world economy was too complicated for such an arrangement and regulation of trade by taxing imports was one of the weapons of government. Jefferson maintained that the United States should admit freely into its own country the goods of any nation which accepted American imports freely. If there were import taxes, they should be adjusted so that America taxed the goods of a particular nation in proportion as that nation taxed American goods.

Many American and British merchants had suffered heavy losses at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War by the seizure of their assets. Jefferson proposed that in the case of war merchants should have a period of several months in which to wind up their affairs without their goods being seized. He clearly saw that the threat of seizure in the case of war prevented the development of trade. He also wanted the nations to agree that unarmed ships should be free from capture by nations which were at war.

But none of the nations of Europe was interested in such a liberal treaty. Only Frederick the Great of Prussia signed the treaty and he had no navy and very little trade with the United States. One of the difficulties of negotiating a treaty with France was that the various American states had their own envoys in France at the same time trying to negotiate separate little agreements which would benefit themselves. The states were just not able to accept the idea of a federal government. They were prepared to support a central government, provided it kept its hands off what they regarded as their business. And shipping rum from Massachusetts to France was something that Massachusetts looked on as its own affair.

In the spring of 1785, Benjamin Franklin at last secured the consent of the Congress for his return to America. Tom Jefferson was notified that he was to take over as Minister to France and

was presented in this capacity to the Count of Vergennes, the French Minister of State. "You are to replace Monsieur Franklin?" the Count asked.

"I am to succeed him," replied Jefferson. "No one can replace him."

When Franklin returned to the United States, John Adams was appointed Minister to the Court of King George in England. When Adams had been in England a little while, he asked Jefferson to join him in London to try to obtain Britain's agreement to a treaty of commerce. Before Jefferson could leave, however, he had to provide for Patsy. He did not want to leave her in Paris with all its luxury unless she was in good hands, and could not take her to England for he did not expect to be away for more than a few weeks. So he left Patsy in a convent and visited her every day for two or three weeks until she had settled down there; then he left for England.

The two old friends cooled their heels in London for some days before being summoned to the palace so that Jefferson could be presented formally to King George III as an American minister. Jefferson did not look forward to the meeting. In the Declaration of Independence he had denounced the King as a tyrant beyond the consideration of decent men. The world had read of this denunciation, and Jefferson, who saw no reason to retract a word of it, expected that the King would show his resentment.

His expectation was fully realized. When the Lord Chamberlain, before the glittering court, called out, "Thomas Jefferson, Esquire, Envoy of the United States of America," and Jefferson advanced toward the King as protocol demanded, George deliberately turned his back on him. Taking their cue from their sovereign, the courtiers left the two Americans severely alone. It was quite plain that no treaty of commerce was likely to be approved in such an atmosphere.

Jefferson was thoroughly outraged by the King's behavior. His feelings were not soothed by a pompous general who told John Adams and him that there was no sense in trying to get Britain to admit the United States as part of the British Dominions again.

"We will have nothing more to do with you, sirs," said the general.

"Excellent," replied Jefferson drily, "it appears we have not revolted in vain."

Snubbed by the court, Adams and Jefferson decided to take a tour of England and went off like a couple of schoolboys. Jefferson was especially delighted with the magnificent English gardens and begged for seeds of exotic plants to send back to America. They visited all the historic places: Westminster Abbey, Oxford University, Shakespeare's cottage and many famous English battlefields. One of these battlefields was Worcester where Oliver Cromwell's army had routed the forces of King Charles I in the English Civil War.

A few English farm laborers and others gathered around to look at the two Americans, and Adams, moved by the battlefield on which Englishmen had themselves struck a blow at a tyrannous king, made a little speech to them about their revolution, saying they stood on hallowed ground. They received his speech in silence though Adams, who was inclined to vanity, thought he had made a very fine impression upon them.

Wherever they went, Jefferson took a sketchbook and a supply of ready money with him. At Kew near London he saw an Archimedes screw being used to pump water. He made a quick sketch of it to send to America. He was shown a steam-run mill and soon understood all the details of its operation. He wrote to Charles Thomson, then secretary of the Congress, that using steam, a peck and a half of coal would perform as much work as a horse. America, he pointed out, had an abundance of coal and such steam mills would greatly increase the output of her factories. He even suggested that steam engines put in boats would "lay open all the streams to navigation."

Jefferson's concept of an ambassador was that he should not merely deal with the ministers of other countries but should also take note of all the things other countries had which were lacking in America and might be useful. He was an ambassador not merely of the United States Congress but of American farmers, merchants and mechanics. He bought as always a huge quantity of material—a thermometer, a solar microscope, a globe telescope, a hydrometer, all the scientific instruments being produced in England but lacking in the United States. He shipped back to the United States hares, rabbits, pheasants, partridges and a score

of bags of various seeds all of which he thought might be useful in his own country. He filled notebook after notebook with his English discoveries and this was only the start of scores of notebooks he would fill on his tour through Europe.

Whatever was new was of interest to Thomas Jefferson, who at times astonished the people of England, France and Italy with his knowledge of their countries. He set, as it were, a style for millions of American tourists who were to follow him, always asking questions, always poking into shops and buildings, always buying whatever took his fancy.

Jefferson, unrestrained by Patsy, bought 200 books to send to James Madison. They were books on law, on ethics and on philosophy and greatly influenced Madison's work on the United States Constitution. He wrote innumerable letters to the presidents of Harvard, Yale, William and Mary and the College of Philadelphia on European university systems and methods of teaching, and on experiments to steer a manned balloon. He would go fifty miles to see the construction of a new bridge or a new lock on a canal. Europe was a treasure house for Tom Jefferson and he intended to get the best of the treasures to send back to the United States.

The mission to England was a failure, diplomatically, and Jefferson returned to Paris. While walking around the city, he fell and broke his right wrist. It was set by a doctor but did not mend properly and he was compelled for many months to write with his left hand and to give up one pleasure which meant a great deal to him—playing the violin. However busy he was, he had always had time for daily practice and carried about with him a little kit, a special violin which could be slipped in the pocket of a frock coat and so carried easily.

His wrist continued to give him pain and Jefferson was advised to journey to the south of France for his health. Before going, however, he wanted his little daughter Polly, whom he had left with Mrs. Eppes, to join him. He missed her. But Polly was not a traveler like her father; she had settled down with Mrs. Eppes, fallen in love with her, and wanted her father to come back home. Tom Jefferson had to use all his powers as a diplomat to get Polly to leave Philadelphia and join him in Paris. He promised her "as many dolls and playthings as you want" and, in the same letter,

trying his best to groom her into a young lady, told her "never tell stories, never beg for anything, mind your books . . . remember not to go out without your bonnet because it will make you very ugly."

Polly wasn't impressed with the offer of dolls in Paris. She wanted her father and her sister back in Philadelphia and she wrote one of the shortest letters Tom Jefferson ever received in his life. It read, "Dear Papa, I want to see you and sister Patsy but you must come to Uncle Eppes's house. Polly Jefferson."

There were many difficulties in getting Polly Jefferson to France. Ships sailed infrequently and Jefferson had to be sure that his little daughter sailed on a ship which belonged to a country paying tribute to the Barbary pirates. If she sailed on any other, and the ship were taken by the pirates, Polly would be sold into slavery. Over and above this, Jefferson insisted that Polly must not come on a ship that was more than four or five years old. On the other hand it must be a vessel that had made at least one transatlantic crossing. With his usual care, he had looked into the figures of ships lost at sea and found that most were lost on their maiden voyage or when they were five years old.

Then there was the problem of getting an adult to accompany Polly across the Atlantic. Whoever was chosen should have had smallpox so the disease would not be communicated to Polly. Polly had been vaccinated but Jefferson was taking no chances. Every time he thought of his little daughter, his heart was wrenched; Patsy looked like him, but Polly was tiny and pretty like her mother.

It was not until the summer of 1787 that Polly finally reached Europe. It took a plot to get her on board the ship. Mrs. Eppes took Polly to the ship with her own two children. They stayed aboard for a day or two and then while Polly was asleep her cousins went ashore and she woke up to find the ship at sea. She was taken to England and Jefferson sent a trusted servant, Petit, to London for her. He could not leave France himself. Polly had been met in London by John Adams' wife Abigail. It wasn't long before Polly was as in love with Abigail Adams as she had been with her aunt Mrs. Eppes. In fact, on the way over to London she had become desperately attached to the ship's captain and Mrs. Adams had had a hard time persuading her to leave him.

John Adams' wife wrote to a friend in America about Polly: "I grew so fond of her and she was so much attached to me that when Mr. Jefferson sent for her they were obliged to force the little creature away. She is but eight years old. She would sit sometimes and describe to me the parting with her aunt who brought her up, the obligation she was under to her, and the love she had for her little cousins till the tears would stream down her cheeks; and how I had been her friend and she loved me. Her Papa would break her heart by making her go again. She clung around me so that I could not help shedding a tear at parting with her."

Finally Polly arrived in Paris to meet her father and Patsy. She had of course become enormously attached to the servant Petit who had brought her. She stared at her tall father and her elder sister and clung to Petit's hand.

"Mistress Polly," said the servant, "that's your papa."

She eyed her father gravely. "If you pick me up, I shall cry," she announced.

"If I don't, I shall cry," said Thomas Jefferson. So he picked her up and soon she was trotting all around Paris with him and her sister, being bought innumerable dolls and telling them both of all the people she loved and how sad she had been to part with them.

After a time she went to a convent and Patsy had to go with her every day until she became used to it. She was soon the favorite of the nuns in the convent and was reducing them to tears with her recitals of all the people she loved and how she had had to part with them all.

She wept when she left the convent, too.

29

In France, meanwhile, a storm was brewing which rustled through the provinces in fitful bursts, swept violently and then died away in the streets of Paris. It did not ruffle a leaf in the great park of Versailles where King Louis XVI lived in his exotic

court, troubled by only two questions: how to supply his queen Marie Antoinette with the endless money she required for her pleasures, and how to find the time to go hunting. The storm and its causes were well known to Thomas Jefferson. He wrote letters to George Washington and to James Madison and his other friends in the United States, forecasting its probable results. He had made an extensive tour through France and had visited the highest and the lowest in the country. He saw that the storm had its origin in the intolerable difference between the highest and the lowest. A center of low pressure represented by the nobility was neighbor to a center of extreme high pressure represented by the peasants. Nothing but a hurricane could result unless these pressures were relieved.

Jefferson knew the King well and his Queen too. The King he found an honest, well-intentioned, weak man with a genuine love of his country and of his subjects. The Queen he found a beautiful, pleasure-loving, brilliant woman with a will and an ambition as clear and as hard as a diamond. The Queen ruled the King and, supported by the arrogant nobility, ruled the land.

She spent in one night's gambling enough to take care of the needs of a whole French province for a year. She regarded it as her right to spend so extravagantly. Jefferson was constantly consulted by his friends, including Lafayette and the Duke of Orleans, on the need for a reform of the French government. He gave sane, sensible advice which was gratefully received. But no sanity could prevail against the will and extravagance of Marie Antoinette.

The finances of France, through the lavishness of the court, got into such a state that more money had to be raised. The people, however, had been bled dry of money and the French nobility were united in the belief that taxes should be paid by peasants and not aristocrats. Monsieur Necker, a Swiss financier of great sense who had previously been dismissed because he had fallen out of favor with Marie Antoinette, was recalled to save France from bankruptcy in the mounting crisis. The Queen hated him and so did the nobles, and whatever reforms he suggested were defeated by them.

An attempt was made to give the peasants and merchants a say in their government by calling into session the Third Estate,

which was that part of the French parliament that represented them. The First Estate was the Church and the Second was the nobility. But the greater part of the nobles and of the churchmen thought it beneath their dignity to meet in the presence of this Third Estate of common people, which had not been summoned for many years.

Matters went rapidly from bad to worse. The Count of Vergennes died and was replaced by the Count of Montmorin. The new Minister of Foreign Affairs received Jefferson and was soon confiding in him.

"The harvest has been very poor," he said. "Winter is coming and we have not produced enough wheat to feed the people with bread. Is it possible that our shortage can be filled from your country, Monsieur?"

"We may indeed have flour for export," replied Jefferson. "There is the difficulty of allowing it to be imported and sold in France."

"Leave that in my hands," said Montmorin. "We would be obliged to you for any flour you can supply and will pay well."

Jefferson had already negotiated a treaty whereby whale oil was to be admitted to the French market, but it had to be carried in either French or American vessels. He was acutely interested in employing American seamen and American ships, for Britain at that time carried the greater part of the world's goods. The agreement concerning flour had a similar provision, and in the months that followed over 20,000 barrels of American flour were landed in the French Atlantic ports.

Montmorin's fears over a shortage of bread—which in France meant famine—were soon fulfilled. One day Tom Jefferson received a note from Lafayette inviting him to dinner. At the bottom of the note were the words, "Please bring your own bread." All invitations in Paris and throughout France soon contained the same request. However wealthy a man might be, he could get only a few ounces of bread a day for his household. A nobleman, hearing of rioting taking place over the demand for bread, remarked that the peasants should eat grass if they were hungry. The news of this remark spread through Paris.

The winter of 1788–89 was the worst on record in France. Jefferson, consulting his thermometer religiously each day as he always did, recorded the temperature in Paris at fifty degrees

below freezing on the Fahrenheit scale. The intense cold made it impossible for the shivering, starving, half-clad workmen of Paris to do any work. The rule was no work, no pay. But the government moved at last to help the people and ordered huge fires to be lit at all the crossroads of the city and bread to be given free to those who needed it.

Jefferson, walking through the streets—for he would go out in any weather—found thousands gathered around the street bonfires, chewing on gray bread frozen so hard they could scarcely bite it. He mingled with them and asked their names. Always the reply was the same. "My name is Jacques." The bread famine was not relieved until midsummer. Meantime the storm of unrest grew more intense. A rumor that a big paper manufacturer in Paris was going to cut his wages threw the mob into such a rage that they attacked his house and his factory and destroyed everything in it. Soldiers were called out and fired on the mob and a hundred were killed before the crowd dispersed.

One of Jefferson's friends in Paris was Monsieur de Corny. He was a leader of a party which called itself the Patriots. Lafayette was another member. The object of the Patriots was not to depose the King but to reform the government. About the time of the American Revolution, Tom Paine had produced his pamphlet *Common Sense* and this little book had united the country in its demand for freedom. Now Lafayette set about writing a pamphlet of his own for France which he called *A Declaration of the Rights of Man.* He consulted Jefferson over these rights and proposed to present them to the French Assembly when it met.

But the time had passed when France could be saved by meetings and declarations of rights. Even while the Assembly was in session the King, under the influence of selfish advisers, ordered a detachment of foreign troops to enter Paris "to keep order." Some of the French guards were arrested because they had called themselves "soldiers of the nation" rather than of the King. The Paris mob stormed the prison, liberated the soldiers and sent a deputation to solicit a pardon for them. The King refused the pardon. Foreign troops were posted between Paris and Versailles, for the King could not trust his own French troops.

Jefferson one day was visiting a friend and had to pass in his

carriage by a square called the Place Louis XV. He saw a number of Swiss soldiers on duty in the road and a little farther on a hundred German cavalry. He passed through these groups of soldiers and came upon a mob of people standing sullenly behind several large piles of stones. They let his carriage through without a word but as soon as he had gone by they started flinging stones at the German horsemen. The cavalry charged. Jefferson got out of his carriage and saw the Paris mob fling such a shower of stones at the horses that the cavalrymen were driven back. The Swiss soldiers neither moved nor fired.

This attack on the troops was the signal for the general uprising in Paris. As Jefferson drove on to his house, he saw people breaking into armorers' shops and into private houses searching for weapons. All night long Paris was a seething mass of people, grimly arming themselves. The next day they stormed the prison of St. Lazare, released all the prisoners, took all the arms they could find and took a great store of grain from the grain market.

The storm had broken at last.

St. Lazare had been taken by the Paris mob on July 13, 1789. On July 14, Jefferson's friend, Monsieur de Corny, who had put himself at the head of the armed people of Paris, went with five others to the Bastille to ask Monsieur de Launay, the Governor, for arms. There was a huge crowd outside the ancient fortress which had never been successfully besieged. De Corny raised a flag of truce and a flag of truce was raised on the walls of the Bastille. He went forward to ask the Governor for arms but, as he did so, those in the Bastille opened fire, killing four people in the crowd.

There was one moment of horrified silence and then a shriek of rage and the mob hurled itself against the fortress. In a matter of minutes they were inside. They dragged the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor out to the nearby Place de Grève where executions were held; they then cut off their heads.

Jefferson, watching from his window, saw a vast mob parading through the streets armed with bill-hooks, spears and pikes. And on two of the pikes were the heads of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the Bastille. A little later another head was paraded on a pike through the streets. The lips were stained green. It was the head of the nobleman who had told the starving

peasants that if they were hungry they should eat grass. The mouth was stuffed with grass.

Jefferson, as United States Minister to France, could take no part in the French Revolution on one side or the other. But he well knew that the people of France were aware of the American Revolution. Lafayette was part of the American Revolution and now was part of the French Revolution. Jefferson privately cautioned his friend to beware of excess.

"Lasting revolution bringing benefits to men is achieved by thought and not violence," he said.

"All will be over in a year," said Lafayette. "Then we will have in France the same justice, the same freedom, the same equality among men that you have in America."

They both believed this. Neither foresaw the mounting violence, the condemning to death of so many people that a special machine, the guillotine, had to be constructed to speed up the beheadings. Neither believed that both the King and the Queen of France would soon be beheaded.

Even before the bloody outbreak of the French Revolution, Jefferson had been hoping to return to America and Monticello. Work on his house was at a standstill while he was away. He was concerned about his plants and his slaves. He felt that he had done all he could in his country's service and began to need, after his travels, the rest he could find only at home. The Constitution of the United States had now been ratified and George Washington elected the first President. Before this event Jefferson had written to Mr. John Jay, president of the Congress, asking to be allowed to return for five or six months to bring his daughters home and look after his own affairs.

He was beginning to be a little worried about Patsy. Patsy had now been in a convent for several years. She surprised him one day with a letter announcing her intention to become a nun and remain in a convent, devoting herself to religion for the rest of her days. Tom Jefferson, when he received this letter, was wise enough not to make any direct reply. Instead he visited the abbess at Patsy's convent, discussed the matter with her, and then took Patsy out of the convent for a few days to show her another kind of life.

He took her, in fact, to a brilliant ball at the King's palace at

Versailles. And when Patsy found herself dancing with counts and viscounts and dukes in a palace where the crystal chandeliers seemed like a cascade of diamonds, she made no more mention of spending the rest of her life in a convent.

Polly was still the bright affectionate little girl, taking everyone into her heart. Her father sometimes wrote a dozen letters in a day and, to cut down on this work, had bought a copying machine in England so that one letter could be sent to half a dozen friends. Polly could not be brought to write a letter at all. She was always going to write one. She would get a pen and paper and seat herself very briskly at the writing table and tell her father that he must be quiet because she was going to write a letter. Then there would be a moment's silence and Polly would say, "Papa, I do not know what to say. You must help me." But Tom Jefferson resolutely refused to help her. So Polly never got any letters written.

Jefferson began to understand that his daughters needed a mother and sending them to a convent of kindly nuns in France was not the answer. He had promised his wife Martha, on her deathbed, that he would never marry again and indeed, although he was intellectually attracted to many women, he never loved anyone but Martha. The answer then was to take the girls back to America, to his sister, Mrs. Eppes, who loved them both. Suddenly all roads seemed to lead to America and all roads in America to Monticello. He was homesick. When George Washington became President, in the spring of 1789, Jefferson wrote to him. He congratulated Washington on his election, referred to his previous letter to Mr. Jay and begged to be allowed to come home. Washington replied, giving his permission.

Jefferson left with mixed feelings. He loved France. He had as many friends in France as he had in the United States. He firmly believed that France was about to enter on a glorious future of freedom. He intended to return again to France someday. But, for the present, he had to go back to Monticello.

Anxious to return now that he had permission, Jefferson was delayed ten days at Le Havre before he could get a ship across the channel to England, from which he was to sail to the United States. He arrived at last at Cowes on the Isle of Wight only to face another ten days' delay because of contrary winds. He spent

his time exploring the island and visiting places of interest, such as Carisbrook Castle where Charles I had been kept a prisoner. Finally the wind turned fair and a fleet of thirty vessels—bound for America but detained at Cowes by adverse winds—set sail.

Jefferson's ship made a quick and pleasant voyage across the Atlantic to the Capes of the Chesapeake. When the vessel arrived offshore, however, a thick mist arose which entirely hid the coast. For three days the ship beat about and the mist still held. Finally the captain decided to sail in for the coast which he could not see. He explained his intentions to Jefferson as the most important passenger aboard.

"These mists are often the forerunners of a storm at this season of the year," the captain said. "If we lie here, the wind will pipe up and we are liable to be blown many miles out to sea and be another three weeks or more reaching harbor. In these circumstances I am going to head in, hoping the mist will lift enough for me to see the land."

Patsy was now seventeen years of age, an attractive and stately young woman, and she greatly admired the captain's boldness. The other ships which had left England with them stayed where they were, but Jefferson's vessel clawed her way blindly into the wind, with a man standing in the main shrouds heaving a leadline to take soundings.

The wind increased and the bottom began to shoal. The captain decided to anchor, and during the night the ship lay in the mouth of the Capes of the Chesapeake anchored in a rising gale. By morning the mist had lifted and they found themselves well within sight of land. There was, however, a very strong head wind.

"I must keep my topsails flying to drive against this wind, Mr. Jefferson," the captain said: "But do not be alarmed if they carry away. It is a risk I must take if we are to get safely home."

Jefferson smiled. "I know little of navigation," he said, "but you and I are both old enough to recall a time when the whole nation, as it were, kept its topsails flying in the teeth of the gale and came safely through."

With the wind shrilling in the rigging, the ship heeled over, sending the water flying past her in a white scud as she came into the bay.

The ship had been no more than half an hour at this work when the main topsail sheets parted and in a matter of minutes the big sail was reduced to a tattered rag streaming from the yardarm. But the sail had done its work and the ship was now deep inside the Cape.

Yet some evil fortune seemed determined to prevent Jefferson from reaching port. Suddenly a huge brig appeared out of the glowering storm and swept down on the ship running before the wind. It was impossible to alter course for the yards, sheets and braces could not be handled fast enough. The brig grew bigger and bigger until its bowsprit seemed about to thrust over the deck of Jefferson's ship. The helmsman had his wheel hard to port and this alone saved them. The brig's bowsprit tore through the backstays of the ship on which Jefferson was traveling—but a collision was avoided.

At last Jefferson and his daughters arrived at Norfolk, glad to get ashore and stretch their legs. Before leaving the ship Jefferson spoke to the captain, saying that he had in his cabin besides his own personal possessions many important state papers. He was anxious about their security.

"I will lock your cabin door myself, Mr. Jefferson," the captain said. "Do not be concerned. Everything will be safe."

But Tom Jefferson, Patsy and Polly were ashore only long enough to take breakfast at a tavern near the waterfront when they heard people shouting in the streets that there was a ship on fire in the harbor. Full of foreboding, Jefferson hurried to the waterfront. The ship which he had just left was ablaze, tongues of flame licking up the rigging and masts. There was nothing he could do but stand there, berating himself for not bringing the important state papers ashore. Volunteers from other vessels, however, came over to fight the fire and succeeded in putting it out. As soon as he could, Jefferson went aboard and the captain spotted him. "Everything is all right, Mr. Jefferson," he cried. "Your papers are safe. Your cabin is untouched."

He led him to the cabin and opened the smoldering door. Not a thing inside had been harmed though the heat was still intense. Indeed the temperature inside the cabin had been so high that the powder in a musket had burned, but had not exploded because it was not rammed tight. The Jeffersons' stateroom was the only one which had not been burned out.

Jefferson had written to his overseer at Monticello saying that he was returning and he now sent a further message that he would be home on December 23 to celebrate Christmas at Monticello.

The slaves at Monticello and at Shadwell, another of Jefferson's estates four miles distant, begged the overseer to be given the day off. They all gathered at Monticello awaiting the approach of Jefferson's carriage on the morning of December 23. When the carriage did not immediately appear, they walked from Monticello down the mountain to Shadwell. They were all in their very best clothes, men, women and children.

They reached Shadwell just as the carriage arrived there. They swarmed around it so that it was impossible for the horses to go through them. Some were laughing, some crying. They all tried to get to the carriage to get a glimpse of Jefferson and his daughters.

They unharnessed the horses and, seizing the shafts of the carriage, pulled Jefferson up the mountain to his home. When he got there, they lifted him up and carried him bodily up the steps to Monticello, laughing and singing.

THE GALES OF SPRING

1789–1801

30

JEFFERSON HAD NOW but one ambition, and that was to rest for a while in his own house, enjoying the company of his family, his relatives and friends, free of all worries connected with government.

But after disembarking at Norfolk, and before going to Monticello, he had stopped first to visit his sister Mrs. Elizabeth Eppes at Eppington. There he received the first news that his plans to rest at Monticello and then return to Paris were likely to remain unfulfilled.

There were many letters waiting for him, among them an envelope heavily sealed and addressed in a large bold hand which he knew to be that of George Washington. On the envelope was written "By Express," and Jefferson's heart sank when he received the letter, for he knew that it had come by special courier which meant that it was an official rather than a friendly communication. He opened it and the smile of pleasure at being with his family left his face.

"What is it?" asked his sister. "Not bad news?"

"No," said Jefferson. "Not bad news. But heavy news. I had hoped to rest. I have been long away from home."

"And you cannot rest?"

"It is a matter of conscience," said Jefferson. "Can a man asked to serve his country refuse with a good conscience because he wishes to enjoy for a while the comforts of his own home? General Washington—President Washington—asks whether I will accept the post of Secretary of State in his cabinet."

"You have a right to refuse," said his sister. "You have sacrificed too much of your private life already in the public cause." She was concerned about him for he looked suddenly old and worried.

"So has President Washington," said Jefferson. "More even than I. The last time I saw him happy, we talked together of improving the grass at Mount Vernon. Well, I shall have to reply quickly, for he needs an answer soon."

That evening Jefferson wrote his reply. He told President Washington that he had hoped to return to Monticello, rest there a while and then return to France where, he hoped, the revolution would soon be successfully ended with a greater measure of liberty for the French people. Then he wanted to return to his home and withdraw completely from public life. These were his private hopes. But he would put them aside without any hesitation if Washington was convinced that Jefferson's services were essential for the success of his government. "It is not for an individual to choose his post," he wrote, and that was the key sentence of the letter.

The letter took Jefferson a long time to compose, but it was on its way by express rider to President Washington in New York by the following day.

Christmas at Monticello was a happy time. The beautiful house was crowded with relatives and guests. The chandeliers glistened, the parquet floors were polished to the gloss of marble, there was music and dancing and laughter and lively talk, and Jefferson was able again to mount a hunter beautifully groomed and ride about his estates breathing the clean crisp Virginia air.

He did the things he loved to do, visiting every acre of his lands with his overseer, telling him to be sure to lay out hay for the deer in the parks or they would eat the bark of the trees, to see that there were turnips available for the cattle in their winter feed, and to give them some of the lucerne hay which was better fed to his own livestock than marketed, though the price was high. He visited his stables and his tackroom to satisfy himself that saddles and bridles were in top condition. He would not permit a bit to be used on a horse that was not polished to the sheen of silver, and he gave orders to the blacksmith to put heavier shoes on the hunters he would be riding now that the ground was frozen.

The first Christmas at home in four years brought Tom Jefferson one great gift—a son-in-law. While in Paris Patsy had seen a great deal of her second cousin, Thomas Mann Randolph,

of Tuckahoe, Virginia. He was the son of Colonel Thomas Mann Randolph, who had, in the early days, been a ward of Jefferson's father when his own father died.

The young man had been studying at Edinburgh and spent his vacations in Paris. There he had fallen in love with Patsy, whom he had known since childhood. He asked Jefferson for his daughter's hand and Jefferson was delighted to give his blessing to the marriage. It meant a great deal to him. It meant the happiness of two young people of whom he was very fond, and it might also mean grandchildren. The two were married at Monticello on February 23, 1790.

During the Christmas holidays, one special friend visited Jefferson at Monticello—James Madison.

The two had not seen each other for several years. In that time when the Constitution of the United States had been drawn up, Jefferson had been in Paris and small, soft-spoken Madison had had the job of battling the Constitution through the Virginia legislature to secure its acceptance. Virginia's ratification was essential, and aligned against Madison during the debate had been some of the greatest figures of the Revolution—Patrick Henry, James Monroe, Benjamin Harrison and George Mason among them.

None liked the Constitution which gave the federal government too much power over their own legislatures, and Patrick Henry's blazing eloquence, calling on Virginia to reject the document, had nearly carried the issue.

But quiet James Madison, whose voice in debate never rose above the level of conversation, beat down the arguments of his opponents one by one. Point by point, he took every objection and answered it with quiet reason. In the end he won the legislature over, and Virginia voted for ratification. The Constitution was saved.

Jefferson himself had some qualms about the Constitution as it stood. "The best of governments tend eventually to tyranny," he told Madison. "We have set out the rights of the government and that had to be done. But equally we must set out the rights of the individual citizen which the government may never transgress. Man needs protection against his government and has inalienable rights which may never be taken from him."

" 'Nacheral rights,' " said Madison in friendly imitation of the up-country accent of Patrick Henry and they both smiled. "Nacheral rights," had been Henry's battle cry.

"Yes," said Jefferson. "Natural rights. They must be spelled out, and not merely spelled out, but put down in a document as binding on the government as the Constitution. Otherwise we may have won nothing."

"It will be done, sir," said Madison. "All are agreed on it . . . the President, yourself, I, Henry . . . all." He paused. "All. All except a few."

"And the few?" asked Jefferson. "Come! Give me the news. No man knows the political situation better than yourself."

Little James Madison remained in deep thought for a moment. He was eight years Jefferson's junior and scarcely more than five feet six in height. He was slimly built and his hair was already receding so that he looked like a boy who, without quite achieving manhood, was growing old.

"You have heard of Mr. Hamilton?" he asked. "Our Secretary of the Treasury? He is a brilliant man, an ardent man, an honest man and, I think, a mistaken man."

"In what way mistaken?" asked Jefferson.

"He tends strongly toward what I will call the British point of view. He believes, unless I grossly misjudge him, that a monarchy is a good form of government. He believes that an aristocracy of people with wealth and land is a benefit to the nation, for such people, having much at stake, introduce a conservative and wise element into government which makes for the prosperity and stability of the country. He distrusts democracy. I find I put the matter too mildly. He *fears* democracy, thinking that people who are not possessed of title and land would, if given their way, produce a government without responsibility, one which would pass measures in the interests of the 'mob' that would ruin the nation. He believes our present Constitution an imperfect instrument which should eventually give way to one close to that of Britain."

"But Britain has no written constitution," said Jefferson.

"That is so," said Madison, "but he would model our Constitution on Britain's unwritten constitution—would establish perhaps a hereditary nobility among the wealthy men of the land, with a

hereditary monarchy, which would provide the ruling class. The others—the mass of the people—are there only to be ruled."

"And the President?" asked Jefferson.

"Hamilton is a brilliant man," said Madison. "He argues with fire and conviction. And he is Secretary of the Treasury. There is no one at present in the President's Cabinet to give an opposing point of view."

Jefferson smiled. This was James Madison, all right. They had started to discuss the Constitution and Madison had contrived to bring the talk quite naturally to Jefferson's own appointment as Secretary of State. Not merely to the question of the appointment, but to the necessity of Jefferson's accepting it. However, Thomas Jefferson was not ready to capitulate.

"We fought this battle once before in the old House of Burgesses," he said. "The battle of the inherited wealth of the Tidewater planters and the rights of the ordinary people of Virginia."

"The tidewater, if I may express it so, is bigger now," said Madison. "It embraces the whole nation. That democracy which is now implanted in the Constitution of Virginia must be insured for the whole of the nation. The battle must be fought again."

But Jefferson still was not ready. "Tell me more of Mr. Hamilton," he said. "I have not had an opportunity yet of meeting him."

"His background?" asked Madison.

"If it is important. Nothing of gossip."

"Of course," said Madison. He paused. "The background in his case I think is important. He comes of obscure parentage—some hint at illegitimacy." He noticed a frown on Jefferson's face and hurried on. "This would not matter except that I think it has a bearing in this case. He was born on the British island of St. Kitts in the West Indies and as a child, because of the obscurity surrounding his parentage, no doubt suffered the slights of society. These slights, I conjecture, drove him to work harder than children more favored in their parentage. He went to work early in some counting house and showed a marked aptitude for commerce and for writing."

"For writing?" asked Jefferson.

"Yes. Indeed, he wrote a description of a hurricane which

struck the islands in such brilliant language that some of his friends banded together and got enough money to send him as an immigrant to this country to obtain an education. He went first to a grammar school in Elizabethtown, New Jersey and then to Kings College in New York. He studied probably harder than any student there, and when the Revolution broke out, joined our army and was soon, as you know, on General Washington's staff, as his secretary.

"He always wanted a field command but, not being given one, quarreled with General Washington and resigned to take up service in the field. I think he fancies himself a Caesar, and though his great gift lies in commerce and in writing, he makes no effort to hide his conviction that he is a born soldier.

"His grasp of the principles governing commerce is remarkable and his choice as Secretary of the Treasury natural. I must add in all fairness that nobody worked harder to bring the convention to ratify the Constitution than did Mr. Hamilton. But once the convention met, he made but one address and then scarcely attended the meetings. Some kind of constitution, he knew, had to be ratified. But he believes and says that our present Constitution must and will be changed in the direction of an aristocratic form of government. A Republic, for him, is but a step on the road to anarchy."

"And he is sincere in these beliefs?" asked Jefferson.

"Completely sincere, I assure you," said Madison. "He is utterly honest and completely dedicated to the good of the government as he visualizes the government. Frankness compels me to add that he is vain and ambitious to a fault. He is intolerant of contradiction or an opposing point of view, and he has yet to learn from experience the value of considering opinions which run contrary to his own."

"Sir," said Jefferson, "I now find the reason, other than friendship, why you have favored me with this visit. I have had, since arriving at Monticello, a further letter from the President asking that I accept the position as Secretary of State. And I fancy no small part of your own journey here is to urge my acceptance."

"The President desires it. I desire it. The greater part of the people desire it. Your acceptance would bring great public comfort and joy," said Madison.

"And the extent of the office—what is implied in that title Secretary of State?"

"Not as heavy a burden as you may fear. Advice to the President on our foreign affairs and whatever may go with offering such advice. You will not find it overwhelming. I would be happy if I could return to New York with some hope that you will accept the post."

"I do not—I cannot—refuse it," said Jefferson soberly. To Madison it seemed that he spoke like a man accepting not a great honor but a great burden.

31

THE Congress had long been a convention of frustrated men, trying to govern without the means of government, trying indeed to establish a government out of a victory that had caught the nation almost unprepared.

There was no treasury, there was no method of raising a revenue, there were no government officers and there were no government departments. And even had there been government departments there was no money to pay the staffs or carry on the work of the administration. To be sure, there was an army, but it had dwindled to a mere symbol and there was no budget for it. There was no navy because there was no money for a navy. And until the Constitution was ratified and Washington elected President, no start could be made on bringing the affairs of the new nation into some sort of order.

Even the election of General Washington as the first President of the new country presented problems that seriously plagued the Congress which met now in New York. The office of President was utterly new so anything done in connection with it would set a precedent for all time. And there were many things, in view of this, which seemed important concerning the office of President of the United States of America. For instance: how was the President to be addressed? Some thought "Majesty" a fitting title

and, curiously, many who wanted George Washington addressed as "His Majesty the President" were from Boston—the birthplace of the Revolution. Others felt "Excellency" sufficient, but the back-country Senators and Representatives thought that all tomfoolery and said plain "Mister" was good enough.

And what about the Vice President? How was he to be styled? And where was the President to live and was the Vice President of almost equal standing with the President?

It was all confusing and it confused even so sound a man as Vice President John Adams until quiet James Madison pointed out that the Constitution had already given the President a title. It was simply, plainly and beautifully "President of the United States." That was good enough and the title remained.

But now General George Washington had become President George Washington, and Alexander Hamilton, working in a small room, was Secretary of the Treasury, and big John Knox, who had surprisingly started life as a Boston bookseller, was Secretary of War, and John Randolph was Attorney General.

All that was needed to complete the executive branch of government was a Secretary of State and Thomas Jefferson was on his way from Monticello to New York to take up that post. There was no need for the Congress to suffer further frustration. It could meet openly in New York, though the Sergeant-at-Arms would not be called "Usher of the Black Rod" as Vice President John Adams, impressed by British court procedure, had proposed.

The matter of the government debts to the people incurred during the Revolution would be handled by the competent Hamilton, who could be trusted to find ways and means of raising a revenue. And Jefferson, wise and beloved, would see to it that the people's rights were not trampled down or the infant nation taken advantage of by some foreign power.

Business could be conducted then with confidence with such men in command, and already there were rumors around New York that the new government would pay every penny of its domestic war debt, down to the last penny of wages owed to the lowest soldier of the old Continental Army.

It took Thomas Jefferson a long time to get from Monticello to New York. He was delayed by snows that lasted into March. He

left Monticello by the end of February but it was the 21st of March before he arrived. He was two weeks getting from Richmond, Virginia to New York City. At Alexandria an eighteen-inch snowfall bogged down his carriage, and he took to the public stagecoach, sending his own carriage to New York by water.

He hitched one of his horses to the side of the stagecoach so he could ride a little. At times the coach made only a mile in an hour. He heard that Benjamin Franklin was ill in Philadelphia and interrupted his journey, despite the vile weather, to visit him.

Franklin was very ill—dying, in fact. He had come down with a cold and, being a believer in fresh air, had insisted on throwing open the windows and breathing deeply the crisp air rendered frigid by the snows of that terrible winter. Now he had an inflammation of the lungs and knew that he would not leave his bed again.

But death did not concern him. He wanted only news of France. What was really taking place there? Did Jefferson think the French monarchy would survive? What were the most recent proposals for a new form of government now that the revolution was in hand? What of Lafayette? What part was he playing? Emaciated by his illness, he fired question after question at Jefferson and seemed relieved when Jefferson expressed the belief that the revolution in France would be over in a year, and France would probably develop a constitutional monarchy such as existed in Britain.

That was a reasonable solution to the problem and Ben Franklin all his life had been a lover of reason. He could go now to his Maker in the belief that the future of his own country and that of France, which he loved too, was assured in liberty. He had lived a long long life and had seen a great growth of reason in the world, reason which had swept aside tyranny and privilege.

He gave Thomas Jefferson his blessing and watched with confidence as the tall Virginian walked out of his room and out of his life. They never met again, for two weeks later Benjamin Franklin was dead, slipping quietly, untroubled and unafraid, into eternity.

Jefferson arrived in New York to find a mountain of business awaiting him. There were baskets of communications, proposals,

reports and questions all to be handled and all demanding instant attention. For staff he had five clerks, employed to make copies of correspondence. He did not know the extent of his own powers to make decisions and neither did anybody else. All that would have to be worked out. He found a small house to rent on Maiden Lane and plunged into his work. The revelers of the city, returning to their homes late at night, saw the gleam of candlelight from behind the curtains of Jefferson's study.

Jefferson had been to New York before leaving for France, but now he found the city much changed. It was bigger, its population swelled to 35,000 people with more pouring in each month, so that the city was bursting at the seams—a condition which has continued to the present day.

Broadway, its principal thoroughfare, was paved for a mile from the Battery and beyond that deteriorated into an earth road which in the spring of 1790 was a wallow of mud. New roads were being built, tying up the bustling traffic of the city so that it was better to ride horseback or go on foot than attempt to get about in a carriage.

Gentlemen transported through the streets in sedan chairs were frequently flung out as their bearers tumbled over holes in the roadway. Housing was unobtainable except at outrageous rentals. The shopping center lay at Nassau and William Streets, which were crowded with the establishments of grocers and corset-makers, sword-makers, furniture upholsterers, ladies' tailors and gentlemen's tailors and makers of peruke wigs which were then the fashion.

Not far from Federal Hall where the Congress met, auctioneers sold Negro slaves, knocking them down to the highest bidder. Gangs of slaves worked by night at the job of cleaning the city's necessary houses and dumping the contents into the river. The better houses had their own water wells and pumps, while others shared a common street pump, the servants carrying water to the kitchens in pails. The streets which contained these public pumps were always muddy from the slopping of the water. Hogs rooted in the gutters of all but the fashionable thoroughfares, and a country air was given to the place by the crowing of cocks at sunrise, for it was advisable to keep a few hens, the price of eggs in New York being beyond all countenance.

These changes struck Jefferson, but what struck him more forcibly was the social climate of the city. He found developing around the person of Washington and also of Vice President Adams a circle with, to his eyes, all the marks of a royal court.

When the President entertained formally at his home, he was seated on a couch elevated on a dais at one end of the room. All who entered were announced and walked to the couch where they made a bow, to which President Washington responded as best he could, sitting down, with a nod of his head. He shook hands with no one. His attitude was aloof and cold. And the women of the town pulled every string they could to be invited to these receptions and dressed with as much extravagance as Jefferson had seen at the court of King Louis at Versailles.

There was plenty of talk at social dinners of the benefits of a monarchical kind of government, with a nobility surrounding the court. Some argued with conviction that the Senate should be composed of American nobles, who should be appointed for life as members of the Senate, which would then be the equivalent of England's House of Lords.

Congressman Fisher Ames, who had ousted blunt Sam Adams as one of the Representatives from Massachusetts, was of the opinion that democracy was, like death, "a dismal passport to a more wretched hereafter." Ames was a friend of Hamilton, who led the group that favored a monarchical form of government. But there were also others who distrusted democracy and looked for a change in the Constitution which would provide an American King and an American House of Lords. And all this amazed Jefferson who, at dinner party after dinner party, found himself the only democrat among the guests.

"I cannot describe the wonder and mortification with which the table conversations filled me," he wrote. "Politics was the chief topic and a preference of kingly, over republican, government was evidently the favorite sentiment."

Jefferson could not avoid getting into arguments on this subject. Silence when the monarchists expressed their views might be taken as agreement, and so he had to speak out. Though he disliked personal arguments or any show of animosity, particularly when he was a guest at someone else's table, yet he found ways of

squelching those who favored an aristocracy and who looked on Hamilton as their leader.

At one dinner where a guest held forth on the benefits of a hereditary monarchy, headed by a sovereign who was above party influence, Jefferson remarked quietly, but loud enough to be heard by the whole table, "I suppose there may be something to it. I have heard somewhere of a university where the Professorship of Mathematics was a hereditary post, passed on from father to son without any reference to their mathematical ability." There was a moment's silence and then a shout of laughter and the monarchists had been given something to think about without any individual being offended.

He was not long in New York before he met Hamilton for the first time and in the weeks immediately following his arrival had plenty of opportunity to watch Hamilton at work in meetings of the Cabinet.

Hamilton always managed to dominate these meetings. Thomas Jefferson did not at first resent this, for the matters under discussion were largely financial and so concerned the Treasury. He did not pretend to any deep knowledge of the financial problems of the new country, and they lay beyond the scope of his own department. He found Hamilton as Madison had described him—brilliant in argument, a master of all the facts relative to a particular case, and with an ability for understanding immediately the most complicated of problems.

He also found him charming and witty and strikingly handsome. And yet it disturbed him that Hamilton rather than Washington seemed at times to be conducting the Cabinet meetings. It was Hamilton's agenda that was discussed and Hamilton's views that were expounded at length. There were times when Jefferson caught himself wondering whether Hamilton did not consider himself at least the equal of all those present, including George Washington himself.

The brilliant New York drawing rooms might be concerned with forms of government but the Congress in Federal Hall was concerned with money. It was concerned with money in the form of the debts which the nation owed to farmers and merchants, soldiers and sailors. Hamilton had proposed in a "Report on the Public Credit" which was submitted to the Congress that

the United States discharge its debts in full. It was an honorable proposal and the report was heard in the Senate in secret and behind locked doors. But in the House of Representatives the secrecy was hardly complete. The galleries were filled with speculators who saw in a statement by the Secretary of the Treasury an excellent chance for profit.

Hamilton's recommendation, when fully presented, was that the federal government should not only pay all debts contracted by the Continental Congress but should also pay off in full all the debts contracted by the separate states during the war. This taking over of state debts was called "Assumption," and the proposal was loudly praised by some and loudly damned by others.

Why should Vermont pay off the war debts of Virginia and North Carolina be responsible for the public debts of New York? Some states had only small debts and others large ones. Was it fair then that all should carry the same load? That was one argument.

Others distrusted the whole business of the federal government assuming payment of state debts. Certainly it was nice for a state to have its financial burden eased in such a manner. But wasn't there here also a strong hint of surrender of state finance to the national government? Wouldn't such a precedent make the states dependent on the national government in financial matters? Money was power, and if the power of money lay with the federal government, then the state governments would soon be trodden underfoot.

Others looked askance at Hamilton's proposal that the government should be forbidden to pay more than 2 per cent of the principal sum of the debts each year. What was the meaning of such a provision, they asked? The debt couldn't be paid off at that rate for fifty years, and the interest on it would run far higher than the debt.

Hamilton replied that a long period of payment was proposed because there were other needs for public money beyond the payment of war debts. It would be shortsighted to let the debt levy a bigger demand on the Treasury. But many argued that Hamilton was merely providing out of the public Treasury a

source of income for fifty years for those who held certificates of indebtedness.

And then it began to dawn on many people that the soldiers of the Revolution no longer held these certificates, which had been given them at the end of their service, certifying that they were owed such and such a sum of money.

There were thousands of such certificates given the discharged men of the Continental Army. And the men had had to part with them at far below their face value. Some had sold their certificates for two shillings in the pound—one-tenth of the face value. Speculators had bought up these certificates. These speculators then, who had not perhaps heard a shot fired in anger, were to collect the soldier's wages, with interest, over a period of fifty years? And who was to pay this money? Why, the soldiers themselves, for the taxes to provide payment would come out of their pockets. They had sold their inheritance for a bowl of porridge and would now be called upon to pay the full price of the inheritance—with interest.

Indeed, before Hamilton had submitted his report on the public credit to the Congress, news of what it contained had leaked out. Horsemen were sent into the back country of every state, buying up the soldiers' script as well as that of farmers at a tremendous discount. The traffic even reached the extent of one member of the Congress sending a ship to the southern states, with agents aboard to buy up all the script they could lay hands on.

By land and by sea then, the couriers went into the countryside buying up the certificates, and Jefferson was horrified to discover that many members of the Congress who would vote on Hamilton's proposal were themselves speculating in script.

All this debate on what was called "Assumption" took place before Jefferson reached New York to take up his post as Secretary of State. He knew little of it and did not meddle in it. It was left to his friend James Madison to lead the attack on Hamilton's plan and bring into the open, in congressional debate, the whole sordid business of the fortunes that were being made by speculators buying up the script of soldiers. The papers of the day, of course, had their say on the subject. But Madison spoke officially as a Representative from Virginia.

He never for a moment denied the need for the nation to pay off the war debts and assume the war debts of the different states. He spoke earnestly and convincingly in favor of this part of Hamilton's plan. But he said the debt was, in all justice, owed to the soldiers and the merchants who had been of service to their country in its time of crisis, and not to the speculators who had bought up their certificates. To be sure, the speculators had risked their money in buying certificates that might be worthless. But they now stood in a fair way to make a huge profit while those who had served their country would suffer a tremendous loss.

The way to do justice to both parties, Madison said, was to pay the original holder of the certificate in full. If the original holder had assigned his certificate to someone else, then the second party should be paid the highest current market value of the certificate and the original holder should get what remained.

Madison's proposal raised a terrible storm. Some cheered him as the champion of the common man and the ex-soldier. Others denounced him as a wild dreamer who would wreck the nation's credit. How could his plan be put into operation? How would it be possible to trace the original owner of a certificate which might have passed through a dozen hands by this time? Madison himself knew that his plan would be difficult to put into operation; when the House met to consider it, it was voted down.

Then Hamilton, having marshaled all his forces in the Congress, had the matter of the "Assumption" of state debts brought to a vote. It failed to pass by two votes and the whole plan which, whatever its drawbacks, was intended to establish the public credit of the government was tumbled into ruin.

It was after this defeat that Jefferson arrived in New York, and Hamilton, searching desperately for means to get the Congress to reverse itself, decided to try to enlist the help of the new Secretary of State. Jefferson, though no meddler in politics, carried immense influence throughout the nation and particularly with many members of the Congress. Hamilton had done what he could to secure more congressional support for Assumption. He had tried a trade, offering, in return for votes, his influence in having the national capital located in the state of those who would support his scheme.

He might win over some Virginian votes by promising to do his best to have the national capital located in Virginia, perhaps at Georgetown, or get Maryland votes with a promise to work for the establishment of the capital in Baltimore. He canvassed the Representatives of the different states—Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania—hinting at the prospect of being able to have the national capital located in their states in return, of course, for votes. And still, he was not sure of victory. He needed one vote in the Senate and five in the House for passage of his measure. He could not be certain of them. He decided then to seek the support of the new Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, for his measure.

The two had known each other at this point for only three months. They were on friendly terms, each working away at the business of his own department. No rivalry had developed between them. And so, one June morning when Jefferson was on his way to visit President Washington, Hamilton stopped him in the street.

"Sir," he said, taking Jefferson by the arm, "give me a few moments of your time, I beg you."

"Certainly," said Jefferson, surprised that Hamilton should seem so distracted.

"I have a grave matter to discuss on which I need your help," said Hamilton. "The whole future of the nation, I believe, rests on the issue."

"Shall we go to some suitable place to talk?" asked Jefferson.

"No," said Hamilton. "Let me explain the situation here now." And so, walking side by side up and down before the President's house, Hamilton poured out to Jefferson the whole story of his Assumption plan. Jefferson knew the details but Hamilton put them in a dramatic light for him. The issue, he said, was whether the nation should exist unified or whether the states should all go their separate ways and the Revolution then be lost. The public credit had to be established. The national government had to take over and discharge the debts of the states.

"You hardly need me to tell you, sir," said Hamilton, "that the recent war was fought not by thirteen separate states but by a nation which consisted of the union of those thirteen separate states. The struggle was a common one for a common liberty and

it cannot be pretended that the muskets paid for by New York did not benefit the people of Georgia.

"Yet the southern states oppose my plan, claiming that their debts are not as great as those of the northern and eastern states. Though united in the conflict we are now falling out, and our union threatened over a squabble about who shall pay the bill."

Jefferson listened intently while Hamilton poured out the story. Hamilton made no secret of the fact that some southern votes could be won if the national capital were established in a southern state. There was the possibility of a trade—a trade which was necessary to save the credit and the unity of the new nation.

There were some points on which Jefferson was not satisfied. Was it possible to establish the exact amount of each state's war debts? Was it possible to sift out expenditures by each state which were not necessarily connected with the war? Again, presumably the national government would settle the matter by paying to each state government the amount of its indebtedness, and the state governments then would reimburse the individual payments. But what was to prevent some states from profiteering out of this procedure, grabbing public funds to hand out and enrich their citizens? All these points concerned Jefferson, for he well knew that money spelled political power.

Hamilton could not give him too much assurance on these questions. But he said that though there would be some abuses, nevertheless the main danger to avoid was the splitting up of the Union. Some of the northern states were threatening to withdraw from the Union and go their separate ways. This prospect appalled Jefferson.

"Dine with me tomorrow, Mr. Hamilton," he said. "I will bring together one or two people who can talk the matter over privately. Perhaps we shall find some solution."

"If we find a solution, Mr. Jefferson," said the other, "we will have saved our country." He left then and Jefferson climbed the steps to Washington's residence in deep thought.

It was strange indeed that Hamilton had spoken to him in the street on such an important matter. Was it out of sheer desperation and anxiety? Or was there some other reason?

Jefferson brushed the thought aside and went in to see the President.

32

THE dinner to discuss the question of Assumption was held in Thomas Jefferson's house on Maiden Lane and present, besides himself, were Alexander Hamilton and two members of the Virginia delegation to Congress, Richard Bland Lee and Alexander White.

They were neither of them eminent men in the sense that Madison was an eminent man. But they were solidly representative of that sentiment in the southern section of Congress which opposed the national assumption of the state debts and which also wanted the national capital to be situated in one of the southern states.

The dinner was good, without being lavish. The menu had a French touch to it in the serving of hors d'oeuvres and a light table wine with dinner, for Jefferson was fond of French cuisine and planned to import his old chef from Paris. The talk during dinner, while the servants tended the table, was of the social affairs of the city—a reception at the fashionable Mrs. Bingham's house, the health of Mrs. Randolph, wife of the Attorney General, whose illness had been the cause of her husband's absence from the Cabinet, and scarcity of cherries on the New York market, due perhaps to the severity of the winter.

It was only when the cloth was cleared and the servants had retired that the talk got around to the matter of assumption of state debts. Jefferson, as host, acted as chairman but took no part in the discussion other than to guide it in directions he thought fruitful. He did not feel qualified to talk on financial matters, though he was concerned over the threat to the unity of the country.

"We cannot," he said, "have the nation divided between North and South whatever the issue. Differences of opinion there will always be. But complete division, each opposing the other, will but tear the country apart."

He turned with a slight smile to Lee. "I would remind you, sir," he said, "that it was our own Patrick Henry of Virginia who first said, 'I am not a Virginian. I am an American.' It is in the spirit of being American that we must consider all our national problems."

"True, sir," said Lee, "but there is nothing to prevent a man being a Virginian as well as an American. And there is little doubt in our minds that the eastern and northern states are working against us to obtain advantages at our expense. In this matter of the Assumption, the greater part of the money, if the measure is carried, would go to the eastern states and we would pay for it. And yet it was these same states that defeated our bid to have the national capital in the South. They want their bread buttered on both sides and demand to boot that we supply the butter."

"I think you misunderstand the sentiment, Mr. Lee," said Hamilton. "The eastern or northern states, whichever you want to call them, are not adamant against the capital being in the southern section. They are prepared, I believe, to give a little there."

"For a price no doubt," said White.

"Everything has its price," said Hamilton. "It would be childish to pretend that that is not so. It is the part of grown men to consider prices and whether it is to their advantage to pay them."

The talk went on and out of it came a compromise. If the northern members of Congress would agree to the site of the nation's capital being in the South, enough of the southern Congressmen would change their votes to assure passage of the Assumption measure.

"I'll tell you frankly," said Alexander White when the discussion closed, "I'll change my vote, but I will have to hold on to my stomach while I do it, Mr. Hamilton."

"There are some measures of national interest which demand that a man have a strong stomach," replied Hamilton smoothly.

And so it was arranged. What came out of Thomas Jefferson's supper was the saving of the national credit and the birth of Washington, D. C. on ten square miles of territory which, if it was not southern, was not northern either.

Later, when he thought this compromise over, Thomas Jeffer-

son was not so sure that he had acted wisely. He complained to Madison that he had been duped by Hamilton, who had overstated the situation, pretending that a crisis existed over Assumption which would tear the Union apart, though this was not by any means true. He began to distrust Hamilton.

That curious conference in the street which Hamilton had insisted on puzzled him. And then Jefferson decided the conference had been held in the street for the purpose of propaganda. The whole town, which lived on its own political gossip, would know of the meeting in a matter of hours, and southern Congressmen, who looked to Jefferson as a natural leader, would assume he was cooperating with Hamilton. That would soften some of their opposition to the plans of the Secretary of the Treasury. Watching Hamilton at work in the Cabinet, dominating the meetings, pleading for powers which, in Jefferson's belief, would benefit the business section of the nation at the expense of the ordinary man, Jefferson wondered whether Hamilton's politics would insure the kind of liberty for Americans that Jefferson wished them to have.

Hamilton made no pretense of favoring a complete democracy. The mass of people were not to be trusted with government. That was his view. Government should seek a close liaison with business and pass such laws as would benefit the business community. The business community would then support the government, making for a stable institution not readily to be overthrown by popular emotion. As Jefferson listened to Hamilton in the Cabinet meetings, he began to see this all the more clearly.

There it was: a division of views between the two leading members of President Washington's Cabinet which could not be reconciled but came to the fore in every meeting of the Cabinet. The division grew worse as summer slipped into autumn. Hamilton had wide support in the cities among the wealthy men of commerce and business. The whole of New York appeared to be in Hamilton's camp, and although on his first arrival in the city Jefferson had been invited to dinner after dinner, and one social occasion after another, his contempt for a government of privilege, which he was not at pains to hide, made him less and less popular.

The leaning toward a monarchy which Jefferson found in

the *salons* of New York, particularly among the supporters of Hamilton, troubled Jefferson as deeply as any other matter. There were times when he wondered whether Washington himself were not, by the ceremony that attended the President's official appearances, unwittingly giving support to those who would like to see an American King.

Jefferson was not a man to hide his feelings on this matter, and several times he spoke to Washington about the impression he was creating. "It begins to look as though you are intent on establishing a court, like that of a King," Jefferson said. "The people ape what they see you tolerate. Why, there are social occasions around the town that look like entertainments of the French aristocracy—precedent given to people in their seating at a table as if we already had among us earls, dukes, counts and knights. The other evening there was a dance, if you please, at a certain house where the gentlemen were requested to appear in swords. And those who did not wear a court sword were not admitted."

"What am I to do?" asked Washington. "The people wish to pay some kind of tribute to the office of President. I assure you it is no comfort to me to be sitting on that confounded sofa being bowed to here and there all evening. Why, sir, if I do not make the correct kind of nod in return I get complaints from people who were my friends. My nod was too cold. My nod was too aloof. Great heavens! Doesn't it occur to any of them that my nod might be the result of a stiff neck from sitting there through several hours of discomfort when I would as soon be at my own fireside? And, in all this abundance of nodding, if I miss nodding to one, I have made an enemy for life."

"That is precisely the point," said Jefferson. "Do away with it all and none will be offended by missing a nod."

"I have not helped defeat George the Third of England to become George the First of the United States," said Washington. For all his monumental patience, there were times when Washington lost his temper and he was close to doing so now.

"I had no such thoughts," said Jefferson. "I hardly think that I deserve even the suggestion of a rebuke."

They parted. But on several other occasions Jefferson returned to the topic of the adulation and ceremony that was heaped on

the President, who felt that he must endure it because of his office. Washington's view was that with the passage of time the court atmosphere that surrounded him against his will would dwindle. Jefferson's was that it would not dwindle but increase, and fan the hopes of those, headed by Hamilton, who would see a King and a nobility established in the United States.

Even wise John Adams, as staunch a republican as there had ever been before the Revolution, seemed now hypnotized by the glitter of pomp and ceremony. Once, at dinner with both Hamilton and Jefferson, when the talk had turned, as it so often did, to the form which governments should take, Adams described and praised the British system headed by a King.

"Purge that constitution of its corruption and give to its popular branch equality of representation and it would be the most perfect constitution ever devised by the wit of man," said Adams.

There was a slight pause and then Hamilton spoke up. "Purge it of its corruption and give to its popular branch equality of representation and it would become an impracticable government," he said. "As it stands at present, with all its supposed defects, it is the most perfect government that ever existed."

Jefferson was astounded. Did this mean that Hamilton was not only a monarchist but also a monarchist who favored corruption in government? The more he thought of the matter, the more he decided that this was so.

33

FROM the heated political atmosphere of New York, Jefferson turned to his daughters in Monticello for news of their doings and how his estates were faring.

His elder daughter Patsy, now Mrs. Thomas Mann Randolph, lived at Monticello with her husband and she was a good correspondent. She knew how much letters from home meant to her father and she knew the kind of news he wanted to hear. When

the first blossoms appeared on the fruit trees, she wrote to tell him. When the peach trees began to leaf, she wrote him the exact day on which the buds had opened and he, amid all the strain of the growing breach with Hamilton, compared that date with the leafing of the peaches in New York gardens and found deep consolation in the reflection that though men might not know well how to run their affairs, Nature knew how to run hers.

The great mind which had addressed itself in the Declaration of Independence to asserting the rights of man, buckled down to the task of writing a kind of Declaration of Dependence, asserting the duties of woman in the role of wife.

"Your new condition [marriage]," he wrote to Patsy, "will call for abundance of little sacrifices. But they will be greatly overpaid by the measure of affection they secure to you. The happiness of your life now depends on the continuing to please a single person. To this all other objects must be secondary, even your love for me, were it possible that could ever be an obstacle. . . . Cherish then, for me, my dear child, the affection of your husband and continue to love me as you have done, and to render my life a blessing by the prospect it may hold up to me of seeing you happy."

Patsy usually found time to reply quickly to her father's letters, but Polly was a poor correspondent. She hated anything that made her sit down and concentrate in silence. At twelve, she thought her nickname rather undignified and wanted to be called by her proper name, Mary. Then having lived with her father in Paris, she decided she would prefer to be called Maria which had a certain distinction, and in her letters to her father, she always signed herself Maria Jefferson.

Tom Jefferson insisted that his young daughter should do a lot of reading and her reading should be equally balanced between books of learning and classical stories. Before leaving Monticello to take up his post of Secretary of State, he had given Polly a copy of *Don Quixote* by Cervantes—in Spanish. He also gave her a big Spanish-English dictionary and told her if she could read through the book, using the dictionary, she would soon be master of the Spanish language.

Polly thought *Don Quixote* silly and hadn't much use for the Spanish language. But in duty to her father, she took the book

and the big Spanish dictionary with her, and her letters to Tom Jefferson (when she wrote them) never failed to make a mention of her struggles in translating the great classic—or the reasons why she wasn't struggling.

When he left for New York, she didn't stay at Monticello but went instead to stay with Mrs. Eppes at her Richmond home.

In her first letter she wrote, "I have not been able to read in Don Quixote every day, as I have been travelling ever since I saw you last, and the dictionary is too large to go in the pocket of the chariot, nor have I yet had an opportunity of continuing my music. I am now reading Robertson's 'America.'" That, she knew, would please her father. At least she was reading something.

Polly wrote him one more letter in which she announced that she was now reading in *Don Quixote* every day and had also made a pudding and been given some chickens and hens. She was sorry she mentioned the pudding for it brought a letter from her father saying,

> When I come to Virginia I shall insist on eating a pudding of your own making, as well as on trying other specimens of your skill. You must make the most of your time while you are with so good an aunt, who can teach you everything. We had no peas nor strawberries here 'til the 8th day of this month [June]. On the same day I heard the first whip-poor-will whistle. Swallows and martins appeared here on the 21st of April. When did they appear with you? And when had you peas, strawberries and whip-poor-wills in Virginia? Take notice hereafter whether the whip-poor-wills always come with the strawberries and peas.

Polly made some inquiries from the servants and found out about the first appearance of peas and strawberries, but the birds defeated her. "As for the martins, swallows and whip-poor-wills," she wrote, "I was so taken up with my chickens that I never attended to them, and therefore cannot tell you when they came, though I was so unfortunate as to lose half of them [the chickens] for my cousin Bolling and myself have raised but thirteen between us."

Her father might have his troubles as Secretary of State, but it would be just as well if he realized that she had her troubles as a

chicken farmer, and with the chickens dying there wasn't time for listening for bird calls around the garden. And how was he able to listen for bird calls and deal with all those foreign governments as well? She loved him deeply but he was a great puzzle to her.

At the dinner table she listened to the conversation between her aunt and uncle and the guests about the Revolution in France and whether the King was likely to be replaced and what attitude her father would take in such an event. There was talk of his differences, amounting to a quarrel, with a Mr. Hamilton, and Polly wondered what kind of a monster this Mr. Hamilton was who could quarrel with her father.

That spring in New York, the spring of 1790, was a bitter season of blustering winds and gales. When the winter snows had melted and turned the unpaved streets of the city into mud, the winds came and dried the mud to dust, which whipped around the narrow streets blinding and choking people.

"The gales of spring," Jefferson was told by those who had lived their lives in New York. "We can reckon on that Jersey wind from January through the end of March." They spoke about the "Jersey wind" as if the whole reason for the existence of New Jersey was to generate a wind to fling into New York, and that point of view among native New Yorkers has scarcely altered to this day. Later, discussing the affairs of that first session of the Congress with Madison, the latter picked on the phrase.

"Perhaps all we have endured here in our differences with Mr. Hamilton are but the gales of spring," Madison said. "The gales of the springtime of our Republic which will be replaced by a full summer of liberty."

"I hope so, sir," said Jefferson, "but I have known spring gales to stunt summer growth and ruin autumn's harvest."

Congress adjourned in September 1790, and Jefferson was at leave to visit Monticello. He first made a journey to Rhode Island, accompanied by President Washington. It was an inspection trip of a part of the country with which neither was familiar, but Jefferson kept his ears open and found that the agricultural part of the country had no love of monarchy or of Hamilton. Many of the small farmers had sold their script received for war service at a great discount to speculators who were now being paid in full by the government. They looked on

Jefferson as the man who had tried to stand up for them and among the country folk he found himself very popular.

After the little excursion to Rhode Island with the President, Jefferson and Madison set out from New York to Virginia and stopped for a further visit with Washington at Mount Vernon. By common consent there was no talk of politics, but only of crops and livestock and the wholesome business of farming. While he had been abroad as ambassador to France, Jefferson had sent Washington numerous packets of seeds and seedling trees for his estate at Mount Vernon. He was anxious to see how they had fared. Some were thriving, but the lucerne grass seed had not taken well at Mount Vernon. The soil was too acid for it. The two talked soil improvement and crop rotation, which was being used with great success in England, and forgot for a while finance and political systems.

Both loved farming. Both loved their homes. Both were serving their country against their private desires, for as much as Jefferson longed to be at Monticello, Washington longed to spend the rest of his life at Mount Vernon. This was a bond which they shared and in which Hamilton had no part. He was a man of the city, a man of business and commerce with no country estate and no interest in or knowledge of farming. Indeed, in a deep sense, Hamilton was a man from nowhere, from no place of any great worth and from no home of any happiness. His acres were the undeveloped finances of the United States and these he determined to farm as industriously as Washington and Jefferson farmed the soil of Virginia which had nourished them and their forebears for generations.

34

THOMAS JEFFERSON remained at Monticello with his family for scarcely four weeks and then had to return on November 8, 1790, to his post as Secretary of State. He made Polly bake him a pudding which he found good and was delighted to discover that

Patsy, who but a year before had been a girl in a convent, was now an accomplished housewife. She looked after the running of the big household quietly and efficiently and was patient with her father who, while he liked to set a good table, could not stand waste or extravagance.

He liked to raise everything he could for his table, regretted that tea could not be grown on the slopes of the nearby mountains and had to be bought, but had a lake well stocked with fish and had long ago planted grapevines in the hope of producing his own wines. The grapes proved suitable for dessert but gave an ignoble wine which Jefferson's palate could not tolerate.

He was still sure that America could produce wines comparable to those of France, and he had plans for starting a nail factory, nails being scarce and expensive, but these were not very far advanced. Also he was excited about a machine invented by a man called Eli Whitney for getting the seed out of cotton. It was called a cotton gin and the design for it had been submitted to Jefferson, who besides being Secretary of State, had been put in charge of the Patent Office by Congress. He had issued a patent with delight and wrote an encouraging letter to Whitney, mentioning that he raised a little cotton himself and the whole nation should benefit from his machine.

While he was at Monticello on his brief holiday which would not last even until Christmas, he looked over some earthenware pots in which he had planted some rice seed. The seed had been gathered in the East Indies by Lieutenant William Bligh of the British Royal Navy and Jefferson had managed to get hold of a little of it. Not many years later, Lieutenant Bligh would be gathering breadfruit in Tahiti and would become the victim of one of the world's most famous mutinies.

Congress began its session in the winter of 1790 in Philadelphia, the members of both the House and the Senate having had enough of New York where prices were high, accommodation hard to come by and the weather uncomfortable.

One of the first matters the members had to consider was some measure for raising money with which to pay off the state war debts which the nation had now taken over. Hamilton had had no vacation but had been working away on an excise bill which would provide the revenue needed. This bill would levy a tax on

luxuries, specifically on whiskey. Hamilton anticipated some resistance but then there would be resistance no matter what was taxed.

Jefferson could take no interest in this matter for he had supported Hamilton's plan for taking over the state war debts and certainly money had to be raised for payment. But he knew more of the country people and particularly those of the West and South than Hamilton did, and he knew that Hamilton could hardly have picked anything more likely to make him unpopular than a tax on whiskey.

Whiskey, Jefferson knew, might be a luxury in New York or in New England where people could get French wine or rum made from West Indian molasses for their entertainment. But the pioneers of western Pennsylvania and the farmers of the Carolinas and Georgia had no ready source of wine or rum and made their own whiskey. So Hamilton's tax fell directly on the southern farmer and the western pioneer. His proposal passed the Congress over the growls of Representatives from Pennsylvania and the South. Excise men were appointed to collect the tax and the mountaineers of western Pennsylvania and Virginia looked to the priming of their muskets.

Hamilton perhaps did not know, being essentially a man of the city, that whiskey distilling was a small family business which produced very little profit. His tax fell in exactly the wrong place for his own popularity. Western Americans set up secret stills in the mountain regions and whiskey became known by the then secret name of "mountain dew."

Jefferson had now known Alexander Hamilton at firsthand for less than a year, but with the passing of the weeks and months he had grown more and more suspicious of Hamilton's aims. As Jefferson saw it, Hamilton was turning the Congress into a kind of businessman's benevolent organization. A great portion of the Congress was benefiting financially from the very measures that were passed. Some, who a few months before had scarcely been able to afford lodgings, were ordering carriages. Others were investing in business and, it seemed to Jefferson, using their prestige as members of the Congress to get good sites and good terms for their businesses. Chambers of Commerce were being formed, all of them supporting the policies of Hamilton, and

New England businessmen seemed in a fair way to be running the country that was still 90 per cent agricultural.

Jefferson was not the only man who was troubled about Hamilton's influence on the Congress. Senator Maclay of Georgia snorted that the whole Congress was run by the Treasury and there was nothing he could do about it. And James Madison, who had at one time been as friendly with Hamilton as he was with Jefferson, began to avoid and oppose the brilliant Secretary of the Treasury.

Then Hamilton introduced into the Congress a bill which brought the breach between himself and Thomas Jefferson into the open. He proposed in this bill the establishment of a Bank of the United States. In essence the bank, on the authority of the government, would issue paper money which would be good for the value printed on it. Shares in the bank would be sold to subscribers at so much a share and the money thus raised would provide the financing of the bank. Those who bought the shares would of course reap the profits from the bank. In effect then the bank would be a privately owned national bank—a contradiction of terms that had Jefferson fuming.

Jefferson hated paper money. He had seen millions of dollars' worth of it issued by the states during the Revolutionary War and none of it redeemable at the end of the war. He saw in Hamilton's bank a plan to put the control of the whole of the nation's finances in the hands of a powerful combination of merchants, manufacturers and businessmen. He opposed the bank through Madison in the Congress and personally in meetings of the Cabinet. And now he no longer spoke in quiet polite terms while facing Hamilton across the Cabinet table. He said plainly that the whole measure was unconstitutional, that if it were allowed it would ruin the nation and destroy the very fabric of the Constitution.

"Congress," he told the President, "had not the power to incorporate such a bank. The powers of the Congress are enumerated in the Constitution and all powers not so enumerated are reserved to the states or to the people. Take one step beyond the boundaries specifically drawn around the powers of Congress and you will open to the Congress a boundless field of power to which no limit may be drawn."

Washington listened deep in thought, for on the matter of the Constitution and its interpretation there was no greater authority in the land than Thomas Jefferson. Perhaps nobody else was as deeply read as he in those philosophies which relate to men and their government.

Hamilton realized that he was up against a constitutional issue. There was no constitutional question involved in the Assumption Act or the Excise Act. But here was his great plan on which, as he saw it, the commercial wealth of the nation depended, blocked by the Constitution—or rather Jefferson's interpretation of the Constitution.

"I disagree with the Secretary of State," he said. "The Constitution plainly says that the Congress is empowered to lay taxes for the purpose of providing for the general welfare and also to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution its own enumerated powers. In short, Congress is empowered to make what laws it thinks will contribute to the general welfare, and the Bank Bill will certainly qualify under that definition."

"Not so," said Jefferson. "The powers of Congress are not so broad. They are spelled out and limited. That was purposely done. The Congress cannot make any law it pleases and bless that law by saying it is for the general welfare. Given such powers as that, the Congress could pass a law depriving four-fifths of the nation of the power to vote and say that this was done for the general welfare for four-fifths of the nation was not to be trusted! The Congress may not do anything they please to provide for the general welfare. They can only lay taxes for that purpose. The plan for a national bank does not contemplate a tax and therefore the Congress cannot constitutionally sanction such a plan."

"Will you agree, sir," asked Hamilton, "that it is in the general welfare to establish such a bank?"

"I will not, sir," said Jefferson. "Banks we must have. But they should be organized by private parties or by the state legislatures. The power to organize a bank belongs to the states and to the people. It does not belong to the federal government which, if your plan were passed, would make the national government an obliging junior partner in a firm of ambitious financiers."

Washington did not know on which side justice lay. He asked

both Hamilton and Jefferson to submit written opinions on the legality of a nationally chartered bank. Jefferson, calling Madison to his aid, for Madison was in effect the designer of the Constitution, submitted his report enlarging the arguments he had advanced personally to Washington.

Hamilton, as hard a worker as Jefferson, submitted his report arguing for a "loose" rather than a "tight" interpretation of the powers of the Congress. In financial matters, the President tended to side with Hamilton, who was as brilliant in matters of commerce and finance as Jefferson was in matters of law and government. The Cabinet was split down the middle on a constitutional issue and it was a split over which there could be no compromise.

When both reports were in, Washington studied them carefully for several days. Hamilton's bill had passed the Congress, where Madison had led the attack on it, and now lay before him for signature. Washington consulted with Madison and asked him also for a report on the legality of the bill. But in the end he decided that Hamilton was right and signed the measure.

"We shall have," said Jefferson when he heard the news, "another South Sea Bubble.* Fortunes will now be made in paper money in the buying and selling of stock—bank stock and business stock—without one penny's worth of real gain to the nation. Gambling will replace industry as a means of acquiring wealth. Stock jobbers have taken over the nation's affairs and the only cure lies in changing the representation in Congress to give a greater say to farmers and country people."

When Jefferson analyzed the vote on the bill in the Congress, he found that though the southern representatives had voted against it, the northern representatives had voted for it and their vote had carried the bill. Here again was the dangerous division, the South versus the North. The southern planters had little use for banks. But northern businessmen needed them. The South was agricultural, the North becoming industrialized and looking to industry for its greatest increase of wealth. He feared this difference of activity and interests, feared that it might one day

* Popular name in England for the disastrous speculation in the South Sea Company which, in 1720, collapsed, causing banks to fail and ruining thousands.

rend the nation apart. But there was little he could do to close the growing breach.

Jefferson's fears of a tremendous financial collapse from speculation in bank and business shares were not immediately realized. Instead, the country entered on an enormous wave of prosperity. Many new industries were opened up. Many new houses and public buildings were erected. Farmers found a ready market at a good price for their crops and the merchant marine was prospering, even though British markets were closed and French markets, due to the Revolution in France, uncertain. Enterprising New England shipowners were opening a prosperous trade with China, exchanging furs and ginseng root for silks, cloth called Nankeen cloth (because it came principally from Nanking) and earthenware.

The country was busy supplying its own wants in housing, in food and in clothing. And the people were prepared to accept the paper money issued by the Bank of the United States in payment for their goods. They felt that with the country behind the bank, the currency, even if it was only paper with a value printed on its face, was sound. They were not afraid to accept it and Hamilton was right. He had supplied the nation with a currency in which people had confidence and so the nation flourished.

But the gambling in stocks which Jefferson had feared was also under way and gathering speed. The original 20,000 shares of bank stock were increased to 24,000 and were bought up as soon as available. They were then resold at a higher price and sold again at a higher price still. And what happened with the bank stocks happened also with business stocks where the business was known to have obtained a loan from the bank. These stocks were bought quickly, their values soared, they were sold and bought again so that, as Jefferson had foreseen, fortunes were being made in the buying and selling of paper without the actual wealth of the nation being increased by as much as a cent.

How were these shares bought and sold? They were bought in the first instance with the actual cash of the nation, so that capital flowed into the northern states to buy bank and business shares, leaving the outlying parts of the country utterly short of coin. And as capital migrated to New York and Philadelphia in this flurry of speculation, land values there rose while they fell in the

other states. It was not long before many businessmen found it more profitable to buy and sell stocks and shares than to conduct their own businesses. Money that should have gone into outfitting ships and equipping factories and buying raw materials went instead into buying bank paper. Stocks were also bought with the limited paper currency the bank was authorized to issue—diverting this money to speculation when it was issued for the purposes of commerce.

Jefferson warned Washington of what was happening. "Ships are lying idle at their wharves," he said. "Buildings are left unfinished so that the funds for finishing them can be used for buying stocks. Capital is taken away from agriculture and commerce to be used in stock jobbery. There is a rage about among the people to get rich in a day. Why should a tailor work away with his needle when he can win thousands in one day by buying stock? Even if he loses it on the morrow, he will be tempted to try again."

Hamilton of course knew of this effect, but he was sure that it would pass and he did his best to curtail it. He had not made a dollar himself in the kind of speculation of which Jefferson complained.

The palace of paper which many had built for themselves in speculation did finally come tumbling down. Colonel William Duer, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, had invested so heavily in paper stocks of all kinds that his company could not meet its obligations. He attempted to sell some of his holdings, but in 1792 a kind of panic spread among the people when they heard that Duer was selling out. The market was flooded with stocks and their values tumbled so that thousands were ruined overnight. There were fistfights in the streets of New York and challenges to duels and many people, wealthy citizens one day, were fugitives from their creditors the next. The collapse was big but it was neither national nor catastrophic.

Despite Jefferson's fears, the country was producing enough real wealth in the form of goods to weather the storm. The bank remained firm; the national currency paper, through it all, remained acceptable. Economically the nation was stronger than Jefferson had believed. He had lost the first round with Hamil-

ton, whose national bank, by providing a sound supply of currency, brought needed prosperity to the new nation.

Hamilton's popularity soared in the northern and eastern states. In the western and southern states, which had little industry or shipping, he was distrusted and Jefferson was the hero of the small farmers who made up the bulk of the population.

35

JEFFERSON had found a pleasant house in Philadelphia on the banks of the Schuylkill River, with a good garden around it, which he had rented for the duration of his stay in the city. There was over an acre of ground surrounding the house at his disposal and a number of lovely plane trees to shade the lawns of the garden. With the coming of spring and warm weather, he started to move the contents of his study into the garden—his writing desk, his chair, some books stacked around on tables. And in this open-air office he did much of his work and was much happier than at the official home of his department in the city.

He couldn't help improving the grounds—straightening a path here, putting a curve of hedge at another place, begging a few rose cuttings from neighbors and exchanging seeds with them. If they hadn't known he was Secretary of State, they might have mistaken him for a gentleman of leisure, intensely interested in books and horticulture.

There was a lot of traffic up and down the Schuylkill River, which was a lovely stream in those days. The river was fished for shad and trout and bream, and waterboatmen took parties up and down the stream on outings. Traveling thus, people often saw the tall, red-haired Secretary of State, his stockings and knee breeches dusted with the pollen of marsh marigolds which flourished on the banks, picking the wildflowers of the meadow.

Jefferson became worried about his eldest daughter, Patsy. When he left Monticello in the previous November, she had told him she was expecting a baby. And for weeks she didn't write him a word on the subject. His anxieties were put at rest early in

February when Patsy wrote him that her baby was a girl and she and the baby were well. He was immediately full of advice on the subject of motherhood, telling her to take the greatest care not to expose herself and catch a cold. On the other hand it would be well to get out into the fresh air; if she started a garden that would be the best way of achieving this.

Polly still hated writing letters and was still struggling to get through *Don Quixote*—in Spanish. But she did write to say the baby was very pretty and had deep blue eyes. By return mail Jefferson wrote her, forgiving her for her lack of letters and telling her that he saw blackbirds on the 27th of February and robin red-breasts on the 7th of March and also heard frogs for the first time that year.

"Oh dear," said Polly when she got this letter. "Spring again. And now it's frogs." But Jefferson was relentless. He loved nature so much himself that he assumed that everybody else shared this interest. He was soon writing Polly again the whole details of the pageant of the coming of spring.

Bluebirds had followed the frogs, appearing in the woodlands on March 17th. The very next day the weeping willow before his house had put out its first leaflets. The lilac and gooseberry had started to leaf on the 25th of March and the golden willow on the 26th.

He lived alone, except for his servants, in the house by the Schuylkill River, with the lilacs and the golden willow and the gooseberry patch and he needed someone to share these things with him. So he thought of James Madison and invited him to come and board with him. Madison had his kind of mind and was interested in many things, and Jefferson held out a further bait. Cases of books had arrived from France and he was setting up a library in the house where Madison could have free run of all the books.

But Madison was not greatly interested in botany. At least he was not interested in botany as botany. But botany as politics had a certain appeal to James Madison. And so one day he called on Jefferson at the house by the river and exulted over the coming of spring and smiled as Jefferson assured him that the guelder-rose and dogwood and redbud and azaleas were sure to blossom in the first week of May.

"I find," said Jefferson, "though Polly is not the best cor-

respondent on the subject, that spring is two weeks earlier in Virginia than in Pennsylvania."

"I wonder how New York compares," said Madison.

"New York?" echoed Jefferson.

"Yes. New York. It would be interesting to know whether the redbud blossomed in the first week in May in New York and whether the lilac was in bloom by the last of April. Why not a trip together into the New York countryside to see how spring is coming there?"

"With all my heart," said Jefferson, "I would like nothing better. We could go up to Albany and then to Lake George. I have never seen it and am told it is one of the most beautiful of our lakes."

"And then we could go on to Bennington and so through Vermont to the Connecticut River, and down the river to Hartford and then back to New York and so return to Philadelphia," said Madison. "There is not much sense in setting our foot upon the road and not traveling the fullest possible distance."

"Come," said Jefferson. "I have a map. We will trace the whole route. We shall have good horses and fine summer roads, and take a meal in the grass by the roadside and forget about politics."

"Right," said Madison. "But of course courtesy will demand that we call on Governor George Clinton of New York. And we would be wanting in breeding if we did not call upon the Governors of Massachusetts and Vermont as well."

"Mr. Madison," said Jefferson, a suspicion beginning to form in his mind, "are you sure that we are undertaking this trip in the interests of botany?"

"Mr. Jefferson," replied Madison with a slight smile, "you have your botany and I have mine. I would remind you that next year there is an election, and votes like flowers require cultivation. We must, sir, bring something of the countryside into the Congress."

Jefferson looked searchingly into his friend's face. "Tell me," he said, "is your mind never without a political plan?"

"Sir," said Madison, "politics is a science as stimulating as horticulture. America is a garden. Let us look to its cultivation and sow a few seeds of a republican kind. I can attend to that while you classify the wildflowers and make notes of the time of their first appearance."

And so the two of them—tall Thomas Jefferson and wizened little James Madison—planned a most peculiar botany trip which would take them into the northern states where Jefferson lacked information on the flora and fauna. And Madison lacked congressional votes for Jefferson's programs.

36

THOMAS JEFFERSON left Philadelphia on May 16, 1791, for his botanizing tour through the New England states. He met James Madison in New York and they set off together up the Hudson River to Albany and then Lake George which did not disappoint Jefferson, for he thought it the most beautiful body of water he had ever seen.

The lake was crystal clear and the steep banks rich with groves of white pine, silver fir, aspen and paper birch. The paper birch interested Jefferson and he had soon acquired a book with leaves made of the bark of the tree and it was on this that he wrote his letters to his daughters. He fished in the lake with Madison, catching speckled trout, salmon and bass. He weighed them all and made notes of the weights and sailed on the lake in a passenger sloop which then went on to Lake Champlain.

But Lake Champlain was a disappointment. The water was turbulent and muddy, the surface of the lake windswept and the fishing very poor. Jefferson and Madison sailed on Lake Champlain for a day and a half, but head winds prevented the vessel getting to the north end of the lake, so they put about and came back down the river to pleasant Lake George again.

The weather was monstrously hot. "As sultry and hot as could be found in Carolina or Georgia," Jefferson said in a letter to Patsy. And he was not above praising the weather of his native Virginia as compared to that of New York where he said there was six months of winter and then a sudden tropical summer. "Spring and autumn, which make a paradise of our country, are rigorous winter with them," he told Polly and added a little

smugly that strawberries were only just in blossom, whereas in Virginia the strawberry season was already over.

He had been suffering from severe headaches before he started the trip, headaches which lasted without relief for several days and nights. But once he was on the road with Madison they vanished so he knew that they came from overwork and overworry and he was happy to make that discovery. But he kept up the habit of bathing his feet in a basin of cold water every morning and found the dawn water of Lake George delicious for this purpose.

Meanwhile, of course, there were the necessary courtesy calls to be made on men of local eminence. There was a talk with Governor George Clinton of New York and also with the Revolutionary War hero, Aaron Burr, who was becoming influential in an organization called the Sons of Tammany. This was a social group, not yet a political society, which advocated republican as opposed to aristocratic principles. Tammany, then, supported Jefferson's views as distinct from those of Hamilton, for Hamilton was related by marriage to the powerful Schuyler family which dominated New York politics. Jefferson found Burr ambitious, thrusting and rash, and did not quite trust him though he was too polite to show any dislike.

"Mr. Burr," he said to Madison, "seems on the democratic side to be what Mr. Hamilton is on the monarchist or federal side. In short I am not certain whether he is a republican by persuasion or a republican by ambition."

"For the time being, sir," said Madison, "it is surely sufficient that he is republican in a state where republicans are sorely needed. He has, as you know, a magnificent war record."

"I don't doubt his patriotism for a moment," said Jefferson, "but ambitious men often persuade themselves that what will advance their careers will also advance their country's cause. I do not find it in my heart to completely trust him."

With Governor Clinton, Jefferson was open in his distrust of what he called the monarchical tendency of Hamilton and those who supported him.

"And would you favor the re-election of Mr. Adams as Vice President?" asked Governor Clinton. "We know that you are attached to him. Your career and his have gone forward side by

side since the day you met at the second Continental Congress. You were in Paris together, and now you are in the administration together. Come, sir, be open with us. Do you feel personally indebted to Mr. Adams in the matter of his re-election to the Vice Presidency?"

"You misread my nature if you think that personal feelings would affect me in matters of national interest," said Jefferson. "I believe the country to be at a time of crisis. I believe that the future of the republic may well hinge on the result of the election next year. I believe that for Vice President we must have a man about whose devotion to the republican form of government there is no shadow of doubt."

That was all that was said. But out of the meeting came a tacit agreement that Clinton would oppose Adams for the Vice Presidency the following year with at least the silent approval of Thomas Jefferson.

Madison and Jefferson then returned to Philadelphia, Jefferson with several valises of plant specimens and Madison with his valises figuratively stuffed with New York votes.

When they got back to Pennsylvania, Madison had another proposal for Jefferson. There was only one big political newspaper published at the time, *The Gazette of the United States*, with a circulation of 1,400. It was Hamilton's paper in that it ardently supported every proposal of the Secretary of the Treasury who, indeed, wrote many articles for it. These articles were published under pen names. In some of them Hamilton attacked Jefferson, even accusing him of lack of patriotism and seeking, by opposing the Bank Bill, to wreck the credit of the nation. The editor of this newspaper was John Fenno, a man whom Hamilton had once saved from bankruptcy. He was utterly loyal to Hamilton and completely hostile to Jefferson. Fenno was also a convinced monarchist. "Take away thrones and crowns from among men and there will soon be an end of all dominion and justice," he once wrote and that summed up his creed on government.

Madison now suggested that it was time there was an opposition newspaper to give the republican point of view—Jefferson's point of view.

"There is a gentleman, Philip Morin Freneau, once a classmate of mine, an ardent republican and one who would make an

excellent editor for such a paper," said Madison. "He is an accomplished linguist, a poet and a journalist. Why not offer him a position in your department as a translating clerk? With a salary to meet his needs, he could then undertake the publishing of a newspaper which would answer Hamilton's *Gazette*."

All that Jefferson would do, however, was write to Freneau, offering him the job as translating clerk in the State Department. "The salary indeed is very low, being but two hundred and fifty dollars a year," he wrote, "but also it gives so little to do as not to interfere with any other calling the person [who takes the post] may choose."

Freneau at first refused the post, but finally agreed, came to Philadelphia and, in October of 1791, began to publish the *National Gazette*, bringing an edition out twice a week.

The result was that the quarrels of the Cabinet between Hamilton and Jefferson were now brought out into the open, laid before the public in the two newspapers—the *Gazette of the United States*, Hamilton's newspaper, and the *National Gazette*, Jefferson's newspaper.

There was one difference, however, between Hamilton and Jefferson in their relationship to these party newspapers. Jefferson never told Freneau what to put in his newspaper, did not see the articles before publication and never wrote a word for it. Hamilton however was a kind of editor-in-chief of Fenno's paper, writing many of the editorials himself and writing many articles on public affairs which were printed under pen names though everybody soon knew that the author was Alexander Hamilton.

Now there began to appear two distinct parties in American political life—a party which supported Hamilton and became known as the Federalists, and a party which supported Jefferson and which became known as Democratic-Republicans, later called the Republicans. It was not, however, the ancestor of the Republican Party of today.

Freneau was too brilliant a man to try to refute the cleverly reasoned articles of Alexander Hamilton. He knew that the public would not follow astute reasoning closely. The way to bring Hamilton down was to ridicule him, and Freneau was a master of ridicule. During the Revolutionary War Freneau had

built a ship at his own expense, armed it and set out to fight the British. His vessel, the *Aurora*, was sunk in an engagement and he was taken a prisoner and put on one of the horrid prison ships of the time. He wrote a sardonic verse of four lines, summarizing his views of the Hessian doctor who attended the sick of the prison ship:

Here, uncontrolled, he exercised his trade,
And grew experienced by the deaths he made;
By frequent blows we from his cane endured,
He killed at least as many as he cured.

It was this talent for satire that Freneau now turned against Hamilton, who, like many men of genius, was a victim of pride. He could scarcely tolerate an argument that ran against his own reasoning, for he took all things personally. Freneau, a small, stooped man with the spirit of a poet and the heart of a sea captain, knew this weakness and stabbed vigorously and repeatedly at Hamilton's reputation.

His attacks drove Hamilton to cold fury. For the Secretary of the Treasury to be publicly pilloried by a clerk in the State Department was more than he could stand. He was convinced that Jefferson was behind the attacks and in his anger he committed a grave error. He himself replied to Freneau's taunts, though under the nameless signature "An American."

The one man who was caught in the middle of this Cabinet fight conducted in the public press was George Washington. He was greatly disturbed to find the two senior members of his Cabinet at each other's throats in the daily press, with the public taking sides. He had hoped for unity in his Cabinet and thought Hamilton and Jefferson would become a brilliant team working together for the benefit of the country—one in the field of finance and the other in the field of foreign affairs which were daily becoming more important. Some time earlier, he had confided to James Madison that he wanted to retire. He did not want to run for a second term and he asked Madison to consider when it would be best to make an announcement that he wouldn't be a candidate for the Presidency in the coming election.

"If I make the announcement too early, people will think I have done so in order to be coaxed into changing my mind," said

Washington. "If I make it too late, it will not be fair to others who may wish to seek the office. The timing of the announcement is very important and I wish you would advise me when you think would be the best time to make it."

Madison was deeply disturbed at the prospect and said so. But Washington was firm. He started to speculate on a successor and asked Madison whether he thought Jefferson would run for the office—or if not run for it, accept it if the vote went in that direction.

"I am sure that he will not," said Madison. "He wants nothing more than to return to his home, to his philosophy and his farming. He has a deep repugnance for public life. His ambition lies in Monticello, not in Philadelphia."

"And mine lies in Mount Vernon and not here," said Washington. "I have spent more years in the public service than I can well afford. I am almost sixty, Mr. Madison, and I want to go back to my home."

When Jefferson heard that Washington was determined not to be a candidate for re-election, he pleaded with him to change his mind.

"The country is divided now worse than it has ever been," said Jefferson. "Only one man can bring unity and that man is you. All others are partisan and you must, whether you wish it or not, serve again. Under anyone else, the nation will be rent asunder."

On the point that Washington must serve a second term Hamilton agreed with Jefferson. It was the only point on which the two giants did agree, and in the interest of preventing a national split between warring parties, Washington reluctantly agreed to serve for a second term, if elected.

He had hardly made the decision when the enmity between his two chief lieutenants broke into the public press. He was angered and felt betrayed, and he wrote a letter to Jefferson and another to Hamilton, asking them to compose their differences. Jefferson had returned to Monticello, for the Congress had at last wound up its business and he received Washington's letter there. Washington's was a polite and restrained letter, a plea for co-operation within the government. But Jefferson was in no mood to accept the President's advice to put aside differences in the national good. He wrote a reply of some 3,000 words in which he

denounced Hamilton's policies and defended himself against Hamilton's attacks.

Hamilton had asserted that he was hostile to the Constitution. "False," said Jefferson. "No man approved every tittle of the Constitution. My objection . . . was that it lacked a bill of rights securing freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom from standing armies, trial by jury and a constant Habeas Corpus act. Colonel Hamilton's was that it did not provide for a King and a House of Lords. The sense of America has approved my objection and added a Bill of Rights, not the King and Lords."

He defended freedom of the press and both Fenno's and Freneau's rights to publish newspapers of opposing views. "No government ought to be without censors and where the press is free, no one ever will," he wrote.

He concluded his letter by announcing that he himself wished to retire from office. But when he retired and was again a private citizen, he would feel justified in defending himself from Hamilton's attacks. Some of his fury against Hamilton came out as he referred to him as a man "whose history . . . is a tissue of machinations against the liberty of the country which has not only received and given him bread, but heaped its honors on his head."

It was not like Jefferson to hold a man's origins against him, but his anger against Hamilton could not be contained. It was more than anger. It was white-hot indignation at the thought of an immigrant wrecking the liberties of the nation that had taken him in.

Three weeks after he sent this letter off, and with Congress about to convene again in Philadelphia, Jefferson called on Washington at Mount Vernon. Washington pleaded with Jefferson not to insist on retiring. "I myself wished to retire, as you know," he said. "You persuaded me to be a candidate for re-election in the national interest. I agreed. I now ask you, also in the national interest, to serve again as Secretary of State. I need your views in the Cabinet as a counter-check to those of Mr. Hamilton. I am not partisan. You are both needed, one to balance the other."

"I am a Republican. Mr. Hamilton favors a monarchy," said Jefferson. "I cannot work with such a man nor agree with him.

There is a strong tide of monarchy and aristocracy running through the country and it is the work of Mr. Hamilton."

They parted without Jefferson giving any promise on the subject of his retirement.

37

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON had also written to Hamilton asking him to drop the press campaign against Jefferson. He wanted to know whether it was true that Hamilton himself had written some of the articles attacking Jefferson. Hamilton admitted that this was so but he could not promise not to write any more. The battle in the press had reached such a point that he could not withdraw. And so Washington was left with no peace in sight between his two ministers and not even a promise from Jefferson that he would continue to serve as Secretary of State.

It was James Madison who convinced Jefferson that he must remain in office. "You cannot retire under fire," he said. "It will not do to resign your office and then attempt to reply to Hamilton when you are a private citizen. Your retirement would merely give Hamilton the victory he seeks and your replies would be ineffective."

Against this background the election campaign of 1792 was bitter. Jefferson coined the word "monocrat" for Hamilton and his followers, meaning that they sought rule through one person who would be a kind of a dictator.

Vice President John Adams coined the word "mobocracy" to describe the followers of Jefferson, meaning that these were people who favored rule by an illiterate and irresponsible mob in the name of democracy. Adams knew that Governor Clinton of New York was a candidate for the Vice Presidency with Jefferson's support. The two old friends who had stood close together in the days of the Revolution now began to drift apart from each other and would soon be enemies.

It was in this election that what became known later as a

political machine first came into crude being. Hamilton's political machine consisted of the Chambers of Commerce and their influential members established throughout the eastern and northern states. All supported him. Jefferson, representing noncommercial America, had no such ready-made groups to turn to. The small farmers, the frontiersmen, the little country merchants and craftsmen were not organized into any kind of group. Jefferson knew they believed as he did. But how to unite them presented a huge problem.

Sitting under the plane trees in his garden at Philadelphia, he talked the matter over with Madison. It was Madison who suggested the solution.

"We had a similar problem in the days before the Revolution," he said. "Then many were on our side but were not united. The solution was the Committee of Correspondence which passed out news of the struggle for freedom to leading men throughout the colonies who saw to it that this news received the widest circulation. We must do the same now."

And so Jefferson started writing letters to the principal men in the states who could be relied upon to support him. He asked them to do whatever lay in their power to influence the election to the Congress of men who supported his own views.

In Maryland he made contact with John Francis Mercer; in North Carolina, William Jones of Halifax and Nathaniel Macon. South Carolina was dominated by wealthy Charleston merchants but Jefferson found a friend in Charles Pinckney whose cousin, Thomas Pinckney, Jefferson soon appointed United States Minister to Great Britain.

He had already done what he could in New York and he had plenty of supporters in Pennsylvania and his native Virginia. This was the extent of Jefferson's electioneering.

The newspapers of the country, led by those of Fenno and Freneau, aired the issues of the election so that the voters could make up their own minds where they stood.

When the votes were counted Jefferson had achieved a significant victory. To be sure John Adams was re-elected Vice President but Governor Clinton had piled up an impressive number of votes for that office. Indeed Adams, a far greater figure than Clinton, counted only twenty-seven more votes than

Clinton, and what pleased Jefferson was that New York, previously devoted to Hamilton, had voted for Clinton as Vice President. The botanizing trip had paid off.

More important, Jefferson's supporters had won a majority of the seats in the Congress. The one-sided connection between Congress and commerce which had in Jefferson's view made Congress merely a tool of the Secretary of the Treasury had been weakened if not broken. Congress, Jefferson believed, could now start acting as an independent body.

There was one complete surprise for Jefferson in the election returns. Kentucky, a new state on the far western frontier, had cast all its votes for Jefferson as Vice President. The votes were, of course, thrown away, but they heartened Thomas Jefferson, who saw the future of America not in the wealthy eastern cities of the New England states but in the western wildernesses over the mountains.

Jefferson was not long in making use of his new strength in the Congress. A young Virginian, Congressman William B. Giles, was soon demanding, on the floor of the House, on Jefferson's instigation, a complete statement of the affairs of the Treasury Department. Giles was supported by Madison and they presented a set of resolutions calling on the President to give a detailed report on the government's money.

There were no objections to the resolutions. They were adopted, and Hamilton, who had got into the habit of telling the Congress what he wanted in the way of money bills, was now on the defensive. He had to report to the Congress, not the Congress to him.

Hamilton turned his tremendous energy to compiling a report of the finances of the nation down to the last penny. Within twelve days he sent his first report to the House, detailing in elaborate tables the expenditures of his department.

Two days later he sent in another report. Within a week a third report was in the hands of the legislators still struggling through the tables contained in the first. Another week and his last report was in, bringing everything up to the minute. In less than a month the amazing Hamilton, in four voluminous reports, had rendered a complete account to the House of every penny of the nation's money.

As soon as each of these reports came in, Jefferson went over them, and Madison, too. They found no evidence of corruption but they did find that Hamilton had been somewhat highhanded in the handling of the nation's money. Money approved by the Congress for one purpose had been used by Hamilton for other purposes. He had used funds voted by the Congress to pay off interest on old loans.

An attempt to censure Hamilton was voted down after a prolonged debate. But the nation's newspapers had fully informed the public that while Hamilton might not be corrupt he was something of an autocrat. In handling public funds he considered that he knew better than the Congress.

That was enough for Thomas Jefferson. He had made his point and made it publicly. And so the issue of the first public duel between the two men was a draw. Hamilton had tried to drive Jefferson out of the government by writing anonymous articles against him in the press. Jefferson had tried to drive Hamilton out of the government by a congressional investigation of his department. Both men were still in the government.

Their next clash would not be on a domestic matter but on a matter of foreign policy. Figuratively the battlefield would not be Philadelphia but Paris.

38

THE first two years of Thomas Jefferson's term as Secretary of State were taken up more with domestic than foreign affairs. He saw liberty threatened more at home than abroad and so concentrated his energies on the home front. But his office was that of the nation's foreign minister and so he kept closely in touch with events in Britain and in France—and with what was happening on America's western frontier along the Ohio River and the Mississippi where Britain, France and Spain were powers to be reckoned with.

But as Jefferson entered his third year as Secretary of State, it

was not the western but the eastern frontier that provided the prime problem in foreign affairs. Europe loomed far larger than the Mississippi and the vast lands beyond it. And in Europe the affairs of France loomed the largest. All America was watching France where a revolution had broken out which it was hoped would establish in France the kind of freedom that was enjoyed in America.

Initially, while Jefferson was still in Paris, it had looked as though the French Revolution would be achieved with comparatively little bloodshed. To be sure, the Bastille had been stormed by the people of Paris and the heads of a few aristocrats had been paraded through the streets on pikes, but Lafayette had been put in charge of the National Guard, which meant that he was in charge of the armed forces of the Revolution. Such a man would not allow widespread slaughter. Indeed, Lafayette welcomed the storming of the Bastille and sent the key of that terrible prison to his friend, George Washington, who kept it in his home at Mount Vernon.

But Louis XVI grew to dislike Lafayette and would not trust him. Whatever advice the young Marquis and those allied with him gave to his monarch, the King discounted. Indeed, the King listened only to his willful and pretty wife, Marie Antoinette, daughter of the Emperor of Austria. And she was unprepared to relinquish a particle of the royal powers. The King was forced to grant increased and more powerful representation to the mass of Frenchmen, but contrived to undo this work behind the scenes.

Jefferson had his own minister in Paris, Gouverneur Morris, and of course received reports from him of affairs in France. The view Morris took of the progress of the French Revolution often conflicted with the view the Marquis of Lafayette gave in his many letters to Jefferson. Jefferson tended to believe Lafayette and discount the views of his own minister. For a while the facts supported Jefferson.

The French Constitution was revised to give more power to the mass of the people. The King approved the new Constitution. He became a constitutional rather than a despotic monarch and was for a while enormously popular. He had been taken by the people of Paris, in a mob, from Versailles and lodged in the Tuilleries inside the city. He regarded himself secretly, however,

as a prisoner, signing things under duress, and planned an escape. He was recaptured and brought back to Paris.

In the meantime the direction of the Revolution was slipping out of the hands of Lafayette and his friends. Various groups began to be organized who represented the mass of the French workingmen and peasants. They called themselves Jacobins because their Paris headquarters were in a monastery formerly occupied by monks of that name. These Jacobin clubs wanted to sweep aside not only the King but the aristocracy as well. Aristocrats were arrested and imprisoned on a charge of "conspiring to betray the Revolution." Some were undoubtedly guilty but many were innocent.

Then war broke out between France and Austria, and Austrian troops invaded French territory. The Jacobins saw in this a plot by the King and the nobles to bring in a foreign army to crush the French Revolution. The long pent-up anger of the French peasants then erupted terribly.

The Swiss Guards, a regiment of professional soldiers whose duty it was to protect the King's person, were hacked to pieces. Semi-official courts were established on the authority of the mob to try the aristocrats who were now overflowing the prisons of Paris. For three days and nights a horrible butchery took place in Paris. The courts met in the prison grounds. Aristocrats were dragged from their cells, accused, condemned and ordered transferred to the prison of La Force for execution. They never got there.

As they left the prison gates they had to run a gauntlet of a mob armed with axes, pitchforks and scythes—the terrible weapons of the farm. They were cut down and hacked to pieces. The gutters around these prisons ran with blood and wine, for the mob refreshed itself for its butchery work from casks of wine. Over a thousand occupants of one prison were killed in this manner before the butchery stopped. It stopped because there were no more people left to butcher. The next several days were spent in burying the bodies in graves filled with quicklime.

When news of this atrocity reached the United States, the Federalists turned on Jefferson. What had he to say now about mobocracy? Wasn't what had happened in Paris proof that people were unfit to govern themselves; that if the mass of people

were given power or seized power they would destroy all who had at one time exercised any authority over them? The mob was not to be trusted and the best form of government was an enlightened monarchy supported by nobles but with representation for the lower classes—provided they were people of property. People with no property, like the French Sans Culottes, were not to be trusted.

Jefferson replied that the blood shed in Paris in the interests of liberty was a very small drop compared with the ocean of blood that had been shed through the centuries for the support of tyrants.

There was worse to come. The Jacobins were now in power in France. All aristocrats were suspect. Even so proven a friend of freedom as Lafayette was suspect since he was an aristocrat. The young Marquis was denounced by the National Assembly and fled to Holland, horrified by the forces that had been loosed in France, but he was captured by the Austrians at Rochefort and imprisoned.

Washington wrote to Lafayette's wife, the Marchioness de Lafayette,

> If I had words that could convey to you an adequate idea of my feelings on the present situation of the Marquis de Lafayette, this letter would appear to you in a different garb. The sole object in writing to you now is to inform you that I have deposited in the hands of Mr. Nicholas Van Staphurst of Amsterdam two thousand three hundred and ten guilders, Holland currency, equal to two hundred guineas, subject to your orders.
>
> This sum is, I am certain, the least I am indebted for services rendered me by the Marquis de Lafayette, of which I never yet have received the account.

The Jacobins were now all powerful. They announced that the King was to be tried for treason, for conspiring with foreign powers to invade France and put him back on his throne.

He was tried, found guilty and on January 24, 1793, beheaded. The news of the beheading of the French King was a long time in getting to the United States. The winter gales were so fierce that for months scarcely a ship arrived from Europe in any port of

the United States. When the weather moderated and ships began to arrive, they brought the news that not only had Louis XVI been beheaded, but that France was at war with Britain and Spain.

This report rocked the country to its foundations. The nation was immediately split into two camps—those who denounced the execution of the King and saw in it a threat to all established governments, and those who accepted the execution as necessary for the success of the Revolution in France. For a while and in the cities, the first group were in the majority. In Providence, Rhode Island, all the bells of the town were tolled in mourning for the French King. Fashionable ladies wore dark roses as a sign of mourning in New York and Philadelphia and others ordered wardrobes of black to show their sympathies for the dead King.

Suddenly King Louis XVI became a martyr not only among the Hamiltonians but among many who had supported Jefferson and were strongly opposed to any form of monarchy. Jefferson was oddly the villain of the piece. "Jacobin," people hissed at him, and the term was as hateful as "Commie" two centuries later. Again the word went around that all this was the result of trusting in the philosophies of a madman like Tom Jefferson who believed that power belonged to the people. Give power to the people and only anarchy could result; the proof of that lay in France, said Jefferson's enemies.

As a human being, Jefferson was deeply shocked that Louis XVI had been beheaded. As a champion of men's independence, he rejoiced that monarchs were "amenable to punishment like any other criminal." On his finger he had a signet ring on which was carved "Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God." He looked often at the wording on that signet ring now.

One other shared Jefferson's view on the execution of King Louis—James Madison. "If he was a traitor he ought to be punished like any other man," Madison said.

When the popular emotion over the execution began to subside a little, the nation turned to examine another aspect of the news which had not escaped Jefferson from the start. That was that France was now at war with Britain and Spain. British Redcoats were prepared then to squash the French Revolution as at one time they had tried to squash the American Revolution. When

the import of this news sank into the public mind, there was an abrupt change in the attitude of many.

They forgot about "Louis the Martyr" and their sympathies were entirely with the French, so much so that Jacobin Clubs, which were really only pro-French clubs, were formed throughout the country, and the most popular song soon became the rousing "Marseillaise," which was roared out in taverns from Boston, Massachusetts to Boonesboro, Kentucky.

The Revolution in France was no longer just a matter of academic interest. Now that it was likely to be put down by Britain in league with other European monarchies, it involved American interests directly. If the Coalition of Kings, as it was called, crushed the French Republic, then perhaps the American Republic would be next on the list.

"To arms," shouted the French, singing the "Marseillaise."

"To arms," shouted many Americans, also singing the "Marseillaise."

Sitting under the plane trees that surrounded his house in Philadelphia, Thomas Jefferson heard the shout and was troubled. He was troubled for France and troubled for America—but mostly for America, the birthplace of freedom.

39

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON received the news that France was at war with Great Britain early in April while he was resting at Mount Vernon. He wrote immediately to Jefferson, warning him that the government must do everything possible to prevent the country being embroiled in the war. Then he journeyed immediately to Philadelphia and on April 19, 1793, called a fateful meeting of his Cabinet.

The subject of the meeting was the war between Britain and France. The matter was one of the government's foreign policy and so belonged in Jefferson's department, but Hamilton had views of his own on what should be done, and he was no man to

hold back for fear of trespass in another's affairs. His sympathies were pro-British and he believed that the United States should break off relations with Republican France.

"Our Treaty of Alliance with France, concluded in 1778, was concluded with King Louis XVI. The King has been beheaded. The treaty therefore can exist no more. The alliance is no longer binding."

Thomas Jefferson listened grimly to Hamilton's arguments. They were precisely what he had expected, and when Hamilton had finished, he beat them to the ground with the one tremendous weapon of which he was master—reason.

"The Secretary of the Treasury seems to hold the view that we enter into treaties with individuals," he said icily. "But this is not the case. Treaties are entered into between nations, and nations have the right to change their form of government without forfeiting their previous treaty arrangements. The Treaty of Alliance of 1778 was not concluded with an individual called Louis Capet who happened to be King of France, but with the French government—the French state. And that government, though changed, still exists and the treaty must be honored. It is a treaty between two nations, America and France, and the individuals concerned in its signing have no bearing on the matter.

"Indeed I find it peculiar," he continued, "that we, a republic, should have no hesitation at all in concluding an alliance with a despotic King, but some gentlemen object to the same alliance being extended to a French republic. Would the Secretary of the Treasury never have agreed to an alliance with France in 1778 if France had been a republic at that time?"

Hamilton, deeply angry, could make no reply. Too late he realized that he had stepped into an area in which he was no longer the authority. Washington and Attorney General Randolph agreed with Jefferson. The French Republic would have to be recognized. The Treaty of Alliance, which had brought the French army and navy to the aid of American arms in the Revolutionary War, would have to be honored.

And yet there was a terrible danger. For, if the treaty were honored in full, the United States must open her ports to French vessels, must allow them to equip themselves in American harbors, must permit captured British ships to be brought into

American harbors. Inevitably the United States would be dragged into a war with Britain. And the country was too young and too weak to risk its newly won independence in a war on behalf of another, with little hope of winning.

There it was. The Treaty of Alliance had to be acknowledged. But the very acknowledgment would jeopardize the short-lived independence of the United States of America, whose army was equipped only for Indian fighting and whose navy was, in fact, nonexistent.

"Let us recognize the Republic of France," said Jefferson. "Let us receive a French minister from the new republic if one is appointed. But let us warn the whole country that there must be no meddling by any of our citizens in this war."

This then was what the Cabinet agreed. A proclamation was drawn up "forbidding the citizens of the United States to take part in any hostilities on the seas, and warning them against carrying to the belligerents any articles deemed contraband according to the modern usages of nations, and forbidding all acts and proceedings inconsistent with the duties of a friendly nation towards those at war."

This proclamation, signed by President Washington and posted throughout the country, was accepted by some but denounced as a "royal edict" by others. The rank and file of Americans, not aware of the grave issues at stake, were deeply grateful to France for its aid during the Revolutionary War. They wanted to pay off some of that debt of gratitude and thought it shameful to stand by while France battled Great Britain for her life. Furthermore, there was a fine profit to be made out of getting a commission as a privateer and raiding British shipping. Prize money would likely be fat, and the British navy was too busy in Europe to protect British merchantmen in the West Indies.

Hard on the heels of that critical Cabinet meeting, Jefferson got a letter from Gouverneur Morris, the American Minister in France. It came by confidential hand and Jefferson took it immediately to the President, showing the contents to nobody else.

The letter announced that the new French Republic, as one of its first acts, had appointed "Citizen Edmond Charles Genêt" Minister to the United States. Genêt had secretly been given 300

blank commissions to be issued to American privateers to prey on British shipping. "They suppose," wrote Morris, "that the avidity of some adventurers may lead them into measures which would involve altercations with Great Britain, and terminate finally in war."

"You know this man Genêt?" asked Washington.

"Only very slightly," said Jefferson. "We have not met but he was in the French Foreign Ministry under the old Count Vergennes when Dr. Franklin was our Minister to Paris. His sister was, I believe, a lady in waiting to Queen Marie Antoinette."

"Hmmm," said Washington. "He is one of the aristocrats?"

"Yes," said Jefferson.

"An aristocrat who has suddenly become a citizen?" said Washington. "I suppose he knows which side his bread is buttered on," he said grimly.

"Don't misjudge him," said Jefferson. "He is not an opportunist. There are, as you know, many French aristocrats who are republicans at heart. Genêt is not to be judged by his noble birth but rather by what he has done himself for the good of his people. The new French Republic obviously needs men trained in diplomacy and I would venture a guess that although born to a title, Citizen Genêt, as he is now called, is a true republican at heart."

"Well, we shall have to receive him," said Washington. "But he will have to be kept at a distance. Plainly his whole mission will be, using the Treaty of Alliance, to bring us gradually but inevitably into the war on the side of France. And that we must never allow him to do. That is your department, sir. I know you will be circumspect in your commitments and conversations with him."

Jefferson nodded. In the service of the United States he must now do something, for the safety of his country and its continued independence, which he would never do as a private individual. He must find some way of avoiding an obligation.

Citizen Genêt, when he arrived in the United States, was but thirty years of age—and a flaming republican. When he was only twenty-five he had been sent to the court of Catherine of Russia and there his outspoken views against despotism and privilege resulted in his being asked to leave the country. That was enough

to recommend him to the French authorities, who sent him with high hopes as their minister to republican America.

Genêt was a man of many talents. He could speak several languages fluently, and had translated a small Swedish book when he was twelve years of age. He had a quick mind, an eloquent tongue and plenty of personal dash and charm. But the one talent he had not got was the one essential to his office. He was completely lacking in prudence and expected on arrival to be the hero of the nation and to receive every aid of which France stood in need.

He was certainly the hero of the nation. He arrived in Charleston, South Carolina on a French frigate and was met by a reception that would have turned the head of a man twice his years. The docks were strung with French bunting, the streets thick with a cheering multitude all of whose sympathies lay with France. Indeed, had he been landing in a French city after performing some great service for his country, he would not have been greeted with more enthusiasm.

His journey overland from Charleston to Philadelphia occupied a month and was, in essence, a triumphal procession. At every town and hamlet he entered, he was given an official welcome. There were banners and speeches and flags hung across the streets, and people pressed around his carriage to get a glimpse of him and perhaps have the privilege of touching him.

The newspapers throughout the country, except the Federalist press, formed a chorus of praise for France and its young ambassador, and Jefferson was delighted to find the "old spirit of '76 rekindling the newspapers from Boston to Charleston" and forcing "the monocrat papers . . . to publish the most furious philippics against England."

It seemed to Jefferson, who was constantly concerned that some kind of monarchy would be established in the United States, that the arrival of Genêt had brought the people to their senses. Even Madison, the soberest judge of events, was happy at the spontaneous enthusiasm for republicanism that showed everywhere Genêt went.

When Genêt arrived in Philadelphia, his reception was even greater than it had been elsewhere. Every civic and social group passed resolutions of welcome and presented them to him. He

was invited to a vast republican banquet as guest of honor and the whole assembly at the banquet rose to sing "La Marseillaise." Indeed, so great were the private and unofficial welcomes for Genêt that he was two days in Philadelphia before he was able to present his credentials to President Washington and receive his formal welcome into the country.

Washington, despite the fact that Genêt had now been in the country six weeks without presenting his credentials, received him warmly and expressed his sincere regard for the French nation. Genêt, bubbling with enthusiasm, all but embraced Washington and told Jefferson, "We see in you the only person on earth who can love us sincerely and merit to be so loved." Genêt's sincerity touched Jefferson but he was worried about the young Frenchman's ardor and utter lack of prudence. He thought that perhaps he would be able to advise Genêt on how to conduct himself, suggest that it was not the wisest thing to be making public addresses to the people of the United States before he had presented his credentials to the President of the United States. In fact, it was not the part of the foreign minister to make public addresses at any time.

But Genêt was not the kind of man who would listen to advice. He brought enthusiasm for the republican cause, and right on the heels of it he raised so many problems that he nearly wrecked the republican cause in the United States.

While he was in Charleston, before even being officially received as minister, he gave out some of the privateering commissions to Charleston shipowners. These commissions were a license to the shipowners to seize British vessels, not as pirates, but as agents fighting on behalf of France. The place of the privateer in war was well recognized in those days, but Genêt had no right to issue such commissions without having presented his credentials. Particularly had he no right to issue them when President Washington had made a proclamation calling on all Americans to remain strictly neutral in the conflict. Genêt was hardly in the United States, then, before he was encouraging American citizens to ignore the President's proclamation.

It was not long before this foolhardiness, this highhanded attitude toward President Washington, bore bitter fruit. Privateers fitted out in Charleston began bringing back British prizes.

And worse still, a French privateer captured a British merchantman, *The Little Sarah*, in American coastal waters and brought her as a prize into Philadelphia. There Genêt announced she would be outfitted and armed to become a war vessel of France. She would be given the name of *Le Petit Democrat* (The Little Democrat) and sent to sea with a crew of Americans, bearing a commission issued by France.

There was an immediate and angry protest from the British minister in Philadelphia. The vessel had been in neutral waters, and therefore should not have been attacked in the first place, he said. Secondly, she should not have been brought into an American port since America proclaimed neutrality. Thirdly, it was against all the laws of nations that America should allow the ship to be re-equipped as a war vessel in an American port. That was not neutrality, the British minister said. That was war—and war on the side of France.

The seizure of *The Little Sarah* occurred while Washington had gone to Mount Vernon to attend to pressing private affairs there. General Mifflin, Governor of Pennsylvania, sent his secretary to Genêt to persuade him to order the vessel to remain in Philadelphia until President Washington had returned to the city.

Genêt highhandedly said he would do nothing of the sort. The ship would go to sea as soon as ready. Mifflin's secretary replied politely that if the minister would not agree to detain the vessel, then the Governor would have to keep it in Philadelphia by force.

At this Genêt flew into a rage. "You have no right to do any such thing," he stormed. "You are like all the officials of this country. You treat me, the representative of republican France, coldly while your own people applaud and support me. Why should I keep this ship in Philadelphia until President Washington returns? Who is President Washington? Is he the King of America? Does he give orders and everybody has to obey them?

"I tell you that President Washington has no right to order the Governors of states, such as your master, to stop a French vessel leaving an American port. Only the Congress could give him such authority and the Congress has not done so. Your President is exceeding his powers. I will go directly to the people of America over this issue and if any attempt is made to seize this vessel, it will be repelled with force."

Mr. Dallas, Governor Mifflin's secretary, sat through this tirade and then reported the interview to the Governor. The Governor replied by ordering 120 militia to be ready to seize the privateer. He also sent a message to Jefferson detailing the situation.

Jefferson went immediately to Genêt and repeated the request that *The Little Sarah* should not sail until President Washington returned to Philadelphia.

"You are aware," he said, "that President Washington has proclaimed our neutrality and that a proclamation has forbidden American citizens from engaging in any hostile acts against any nation—England or France. You have Americans on board your vessel, it has been equipped for war in an American port. This is a direct breach—"

That was as far as the fiery Frenchman would let Jefferson go. He thrust his chair back and was on his feet in an instant, striding up and down his office, shaking his finger at Jefferson. Jefferson found the performance faintly amusing.

"The United States has violated its Treaty of Alliance with France," he stormed. "It has permitted its own flag to be dishonored, for American ships have been stopped by British vessels on the high seas and cargoes destined for France have been removed from them. The United States has done nothing to prevent this. Now the United States is stopping French vessels from putting to sea from American ports.

"Ever since I have been in this country [he had not been there very long] I have been thwarted by the ministers of the country whom I looked upon as my friends. I have been thwarted by President Washington and by you and by every official of the government I have come in contact with. Not merely thwarted. Opposed. Yes, sir. Prevented from doing those things for my country for which I was sent here. I have often thought of packing and taking the next available ship back to France for there is nothing useful I can do for my nation in a country whose highest officials are anti-French. . . ."

"One moment, sir . . ." said Jefferson.

"No," cried Genêt. "I will not hear you. You must hear me. You are in the wrong and your President is in the wrong and violating the trust given to him by the people of the United States. He is taking to himself powers that belong to the Con-

gress. He had no right to proclaim neutrality without the consent of the Congress. When he returns to Philadelphia I will demand that he convene the Congress and then this matter will be aired before that body."

So Genêt stormed on, and Jefferson, who had many years before learned to control his own temper, listened patiently and waited for the end of the tirade.

When Genêt got to the subject of the Congress, Jefferson raised his hand and stopped the Frenchman. "My good sir," he said, "you complain of having been thwarted by the officials of the government. But I now perceive at last the source of all your vexations."

"What is it?" cried Genêt.

"You are a minister to our country, but you have made the mistake of not studying our Constitution," said Jefferson calmly. "You think that all the authority of our government is lodged in one body, the Congress. But you are quite wrong. Our government has three authorities, each sovereign in its own field. They are the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. All the questions which you raise are not the concern of the Congress, the legislative body. They are the concern of the executive body—the President and his ministers of whom I am one."

"Do you mean to tell me," said Genêt, "that the Congress of the United States is not the sovereign body of this republic?"

"That is precisely what I mean to tell you," said Jefferson. "The Congress is sovereign only in making laws, the executive is sovereign in carrying out the laws, and the judiciary is sovereign in construing the laws—that is in interpreting them and in some cases deciding whether the laws are constitutional or not."

"But surely," Genêt objected, "Congress is bound to see that the treaties entered into by the United States are observed?"

"Not at all," said Jefferson. "The Congress has very limited powers with regard to the observance of treaties. It is the duty of the President to ensure that the nation's treaty obligations are observed."

"But if your President decides against honoring the provisions of a treaty, to whom can an appeal be addressed?" demanded Genêt.

"The Constitution provides that there is no appeal from the

President's decision," said Jefferson. "The President is the last appeal."

Genêt stared at Jefferson, thunderstruck. Then he collected himself, shrugged and made a stiff bow. "I cannot compliment you, sir," he said, "upon your Constitution."

"It is perhaps not a perfect instrument, being devised by men," said Jefferson, "yet it is the best of any of which I have knowledge and I assure you, sir, that I have studied the subject thoroughly. Your problem concerns the President of the United States and not the Congress of the United States. You say that the detaining of the vessel *The Little Sarah* in Philadelphia is a violation of our treaty with France. I tell you that whether it is a violation or not—and I do not think it is—must be decided by the President.

"Therefore I ask you to issue orders to prevent the vessel's sailing until President Washington has returned here from Mount Vernon. If you permit her to sail before the President returns, I must warn you that you will have committed a very grave offense against the United States indeed."

"The problem does not arise in any case," said Genêt. "You say President Washington will be here in a few days. The vessel is not in a state of readiness to sail."

"I have been informed on good authority that she is to be moved out of Philadelphia," said Jefferson.

"Yes, but only a few miles," said Genêt. "She has some stores to take aboard at Chester. I repeat that she is not ready to sail."

"Will you promise that she will not sail until President Washington has had an opportunity to consider the matter?" Jefferson persisted.

But Genêt would give no such promise. Such a promise he said was unnecessary. She wasn't ready for sea and would not be ready for sea for several days. And then, with a return to his previous lack of prudence, he said, "I beseech you not to permit any attempt to put men on board of her. She is filled with high-spirited patriots and they will unquestionably resist. And there is no occasion, for I tell you she will not be ready to depart for some time."

Jefferson then left having arrived at two conclusions. The first was that the privateer would remain in the river and so there was

no need for the militia to seize her. The second was that Citizen Genêt was too impetuous a man to represent France in the United States. He was more than impetuous. He was impertinent and ignorant and pigheaded and would not hesitate to interfere in the domestic affairs of the United States.

Regarding the first of these conclusions, Jefferson sent a message to Governor Mifflin saying that he was assured that *The Little Sarah* could not leave for several days and therefore it was not necessary that she be seized by the militia.

Regarding the second conclusion, Jefferson decided that Citizen Genêt must be recalled to France. The trick was to achieve this without giving offense to the French government.

40

HAMILTON had heard of the capture of *The Little Sarah* by the French privateer even before the news reached Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton had been told of the capture by Hammond, the British minister in Philadelphia with whom he was in close contact.

When Jefferson discovered that Hamilton had received the news first and had got it from the British minister, his anger against the Secretary of the Treasury increased. He believed that Hamilton was passing on to the British many details of government policy and activity which, if they were to be revealed at all, should be revealed by him.

He further believed that Hamilton, through his connection with the British minister, was undercutting his work as Secretary of State. Hamilton, he concluded, wished to run not merely the Treasury but also the foreign department. In fact, he wanted to run the whole country. And Hamilton had Washington's confidence. His own influence with Washington, he felt, was slight and diminishing.

The crisis precipitated by Genêt and *The Little Sarah* remained in abeyance for only a day or two. Jefferson wrote a full

report of the matter for Washington and sent it to his office, marked "For instant attention." He came down with a bout of fever and had to go to bed. While he was in bed with fever, Washington returned from Mount Vernon to find the problem of *The Little Sarah*, with the grave threat of war with Great Britain if the ship was permitted to sail, confronting him.

Washington was in a bad humor. It seemed to him that every time he left Philadelphia to visit his home some calamity arose and his two squabbling ministers were unable to solve it. There had been a number of articles in the newspapers, notably in the *Gazette* published by Freneau, criticizing him, and one particularly ugly attack, likening him to a despot. Freneau completely sided with Genêt, embarrassing Jefferson as much as Washington, but Jefferson refused to interfere with him, believing in complete freedom for the press.

Washington then, in a black mood, read Jefferson's report on *The Little Sarah* incident, and sent a curt note to Jefferson.

"What is to be done in the case of *The Little Sarah* now at Chester?" he demanded. "Is the minister of the French Republic to set the acts of this government at defiance with impunity? And threaten the executive with an appeal to the people? [For Jefferson had included a report of this threat in the papers he left for Washington to read.] What must the world think of such conduct and of the government of the United States in submitting to it?

"These are serious questions. Circumstances press for decision and, as you have had time to consider them (upon me they come unexpectedly), I wish to know your opinion upon them, even before tomorrow, for the vessel may then be gone."

Jefferson had never before received such a note from Washington. It implied a sharp reprimand, as if he had in some way been neglecting the duties of his office. He had included in his report to Washington his recommendations about what should be done. In bed with fever he got pen and paper and wrote a short note to the President, to be taken to him immediately. It read: "T.J. is of himself of opinion that whatever is aboard of her of arms, ammunition, or men, contrary to the rules heretofore laid down by the President, ought to be withdrawn."

The next day Jefferson, still ill, mounted his horse and rode

into downtown Philadelphia for a meeting of the Cabinet on the subject. It was a brief meeting, with Hamilton playing on the fear of war with Britain and Jefferson struggling to preserve American neutrality toward all combatants. Jefferson finally won the point that all privateers, British or French, in American ports should be seized. Hamilton did not mind seizing French privateers. But to seize British privateers would bring down on the country the whole might of the British navy.

"We cannot have one-sided neutrality," said Jefferson. His point of view prevailed. Genêt was informed of the decision to detain all privateers which had been outfitting in American ports.

But Citizen Genêt had no intention of obeying the laws of the country to which he had been appointed minister. He ordered *The Little Sarah*, now *Le Petit Democrat*, to sea. Both Washington and Jefferson were defied and the nation cheered the Frenchman. A stranger might have concluded that Americans thought more of Genêt than they did of their own President or Secretary of State. Genêt was a stranger and he certainly came to that conclusion. He was sure he had more influence with the people of the United States than either Washington or Jefferson, and this conviction led him to plunge even more boldly into meddling with the country's affairs.

His first step was to form an organization of people who were devoted to the French cause. These clubs agitated for a war with Britain on the side of France. Then Genêt started writing articles for the Republican papers, including that published by Freneau, advocating the French cause and reminding Americans of the great debt they owed to France. He next issued commissions to frontiersmen in Kentucky and other states to take up arms against the British on the western frontier. In short, he did everything possible to drag the United States into war with Britain.

In the midst of all this Gideon Hanfield, an American citizen, was arrested in Charleston for having enlisted on a French privateer contrary to Washington's proclamation of neutrality. He was hardly arrested before the extremists of the Republican Party made him a hero. Hanfield was brought into court and pleaded that he had enlisted before the President's neutrality proclamation. In his defense he asked the court whether it was indeed a crime for an American to volunteer to fight for France,

America's old ally, against despotic King George III of Great Britain.

Hanfield was acquitted and carried in triumph through the streets of Charleston. The acquittal, since Hanfield had enlisted before the proclamation prohibiting enlistments, was justified. But the public reaction in making a hero of Hanfield put the President in an extremely bad light and further inflated Genêt's ego. He wrote to a friend that "old Washington" was jealous of his popularity in America.

Jefferson had given a great deal of thought to Genêt's position and how to arrange for his recall. He did not want to offend France by demanding the recall of its minister. He certainly did not want to go to the extreme of breaking diplomatic relations with the French Republic. On August 1, 1793, Washington took the matter into his own hands and called a meeting of his Cabinet to discuss the question. The whole of Genêt's correspondence with the government, with Washington, with Jefferson and with Hamilton was reviewed and the Cabinet agreed unanimously that he must go. Hamilton argued for direct and immediate action. "Withdraw his credentials and send him packing," he said. "He has outrageously exceeded all the privileges granted to a foreign envoy."

"Such a course would not do," said Jefferson. "We must be sure that in getting rid of an individual we do not injure a nation. I am quite sure that M. Genêt has exceeded his instructions and if this is pointed out to the French government, through our own ambassador, he will be recalled by the French government. Not discharged by ourselves."

Secretary of War Knox, who almost invariably sided with Hamilton, wanted Genêt thrown out without any nicety, which would be pleasing to the British, whose friendship he wished to court. But Jefferson would not countenance any such procedure.

"The request for a minister's withdrawal should not be made into an affront to a whole nation," he reiterated.

"Request?" cried Hamilton. "We have only to dismiss him—to withdraw his credentials. We do not have to make a request at all."

"I am aware," said Jefferson quietly, "that there are some among us who have no sympathy whatever with the French

Republic and hold everything they do obnoxious. But in dealing with other nations the question is not where one's individual sympathies lie but what is best for our own nation. Individual viewpoints must not be allowed to influence national policies.

"Let us assume for a moment that it was not M. Genêt, the French ambassador, who had offended us, but Mr. Hammond, the British ambassador. Would the gentlemen then be so anxious to get rid of Mr. Hammond—to withdraw *his* credentials and throw *him* out and risk breaking our diplomatic relations with Great Britain and indeed incurring the wrath of that country?"

To this Hamilton had no reply.

In these Cabinet meetings, Washington normally spoke very little. Indeed there were many of them during which he said nothing while Hamilton and Jefferson fought out the issue. Then, and then only, he would make his decision. Despite the fact that he had been personally affronted by Genêt, and his position as President of the United States belittled by the imprudent French minister, he took no sides in the debate, or rather argument between his two ministers, but when they had done he ruled quietly that Jefferson was in the right. A full report on Genêt should be transmitted to the French government through the American minister in Paris, Gouverneur Morris. It should be accompanied by copies of all relevant correspondence and the French government should be asked to recall Genêt.

Hamilton then brought up the matter of the public reaction in America to Genêt's recall. "The man is a hero to many of our citizens," he said. "People are going to question why he was recalled. I propose that the whole of his correspondence be published together with a statement of the proceedings here, in the form of an appeal to the people for support."

Jefferson was appalled. Publish official and confidential documents in the press? Put before the public the whole story of the heated Cabinet debate on Genêt with Hamilton demanding ejection and Jefferson arguing for a more diplomatic approach? This would only publicize and widen the split in the government.

"Unthinkable," he said. "The government is entitled to ask for the recall of any foreign minister without appealing to the people to support the action."

"Perhaps so," said Hamilton, "but our good Republican friend

M. Genêt has such a grasp of the public fancy that there will be an uproar over his recall unless the government presents its case clearly to the people."

"The course you propose," said Jefferson, "would bring an immediate answer from Genêt. He would rush into print with his side of the story also, in an appeal for popular support. There will then be a contest between the President and Genêt in the public press. Can you imagine what would be the reaction abroad—the President of the United States and the former French ambassador arguing their case in the weekly papers?"

Secretary of War Knox now blundered into the discussion. "The President has already been subjected to intolerable abuse in the press," he said. He produced a newspaper in which there was a cartoon entitled, "Funeral of George Washington." It showed Washington on the guillotine, about to be beheaded like the late King of France. The inference was that Washington was as much of a despot as Louis XVI.

When he saw this cartoon, Washington flew into an uncontrollable rage. Turning on Jefferson, he denounced the personal abuse that had been heaped on him. "I defy any man, here or in any part of the nation, to produce a single act of mine that has not been performed in the interest of the country," he thundered. "Before God, I would rather be in my grave than occupy my present office. I would rather be on my farm than emperor of the whole world. And yet, here are the people charging me with wanting to be a King."

These rages of Washington's were rare. But when they occurred, his voice was thunderous, his face red with passion and no one dared to utter a word until his anger was spent.

Thumping his fist on the table, Washington said he repented every moment that had passed since he agreed to run for a second term.

"Want to be King?" he cried. "I am sick of the charge; sick of those who hint it and sick of those who deny it. I have given the whole of my manhood to the service of the country and as a reward am held up to the ridicule and scorn of the nation."

So he went on, and when his anger had run out, there was complete silence. Then Washington said quietly, "It is agreed that the Secretary of State shall write to our minister in Paris

asking him to request the recall of Genêt. When that has been done we will see what the public reaction is and whether it is necessary to publish any of the papers in the case to justify ourselves."

That closed the Cabinet meeting. Genêt was to go. But as matters turned out, Secretary of State Jefferson was to go, too.

41

THE day before that critical Cabinet meeting on the subject of M. Genêt, Thomas Jefferson had written the President a letter of resignation. He had been thinking about his position for many weeks during the furor over Genêt. The position seemed to him to be intolerable and he decided that someone else, more competent than he, should take over the duties of Secretary of State.

He could not shake off the conviction that Hamilton, with the support of Vice President John Adams, was intent upon gradually changing the Republic of the United States into a monarchic form of government.

Again, Washington had asked him to put an end to Freneau's attacks on himself, the President, and on the government. Jefferson, because he believed in freedom of the press, could not agree to do this. Lastly, in the business of maintaining strict neutrality in the war between Britain and France, he was, he believed, being obstructed by Hamilton who wanted to adopt a policy that favored Britain over France.

There was not a single area of his work in which he could hold his ground, let alone make any progress. So he wrote his letter to Washington, asking leave to retire at the end of September—in two months' time. Washington called immediately on Jefferson and the two of them threshed the matter out in the shade of the plane trees by the bank of the river. Jefferson had made up his mind and the President could not shake it.

"I have always disliked public office," Jefferson said. "There are others who have a talent for it, but I have none. The demand

for compromise is beyond my capabilities. And added to this I have been in the public service now for twenty-five years and out of those years have scarcely had one full year at a time in my own home. My estates are run down; my private debts are mounting beyond my ability to pay them. My heart is not in Philadelphia but at Monticello, and that being so, it would be better for the country if I were replaced."

In the end Jefferson agreed to a compromise. He would continue in office until the fall when he would take a temporary leave of absence and return to his duties in January of the following year.

The President's insistence that Jefferson take merely a leave of absence was proof that Washington did not regard him in the same light as Hamilton did—the leader of a rabble which, if it gained power, would lead the nation into anarchy. Jefferson's place was to be taken by Edmund Randolph, but there was still some work for Jefferson to do before he could return to Monticello.

Thomas Jefferson was incapable of doing anything behind anyone's back. The Cabinet having agreed that Genêt was to be recalled, he wrote the necessary letters to Morris in Paris and then decided that decency demanded that he inform Genêt that the United States government had written to his superiors, requesting his recall.

Genêt, while his fate was being debated in the Cabinet, had gone to New York, which was at the moment wildly enthusiastic about the French cause. The frigate *Ambuscade*, which had brought Genêt to America, while at anchor in New York Harbor had been challenged to combat by the British frigate *Boston*, under the command of Captain Courtney. The *Ambuscade* accepted the challenge, and in the ship-to-ship duel which followed Courtney was killed and his frigate, heavily damaged, had to retreat to Halifax.

On the same day, a French fleet of fifteen ships arrived in the Hudson River from the Chesapeake. French seamen and officers swarmed through the city and New Yorkers cheered the French Republic, wore tricolor cockades and ribbons and every tavern in the city echoed choruses of the "Marseillaise."

When Genêt arrived there, he was the hero of the day. He

came by water and landed at the Powles Hook Ferry in lower Manhattan to be met by a huge committee of officials. He was escorted through the streets amidst the deafening cheers of the people. Addresses were made to him in which he was assured that "the cause of France is the cause of America." Genêt was quite sure that Washington was wrong and he was right.

Washington had proclaimed American neutrality but the people wanted war on behalf of their ally, France. French flags flew from housetops beside the American flag, and ribbons of red, white and blue were hung from almost every window. In any difficulty with Washington, then, he had only to put the facts before these splendid pro-French Americans and they would ignore the President and give him their full support.

It was while he was enjoying these triumphs that Genêt received a letter from Jefferson informing him that the United States government had requested his recall and courteously enclosing a copy of the letter Jefferson had written to Gouverneur Morris in Paris asking that this be done.

Dumbfounded, Genêt decided to appeal his dismissal to the United States Congress. He dashed off an angry reply, accusing Jefferson, Washington, and everybody else he had come into contact with, of betraying him. He said that plainly America wanted only an ambassador from the French aristocracy, and not a representative of the new French Republic. He accused Washington of being sympathetic to Louis XVI, noting that when he had first met the President in Philadelphia, a portrait of Louis XVI and his Queen, Marie Antoinette, hung on the walls of Washington's office.

"There is an act of justice which the American people, which the French people, which all free people are interested in demanding," he concluded. "It is that a particular inquiry should be made, in the approaching Congress, into the motives which have induced the chief of the executive power of the United States to take upon himself to demand the recall of a public minister, whom the sovereign people of the United States have received fraternally and recognized."

That was Genêt's challenge. Americans loved him. Washington disliked him. The American Congress should decide who was right. Within a matter of days, the fact that Genêt had appealed

to the Congress over the head of the President leaked out. Attempts were made at first to deny that this was so, but the rumor was finally confirmed.

Then Genêt witnessed an astonishing public change. His high-handedness was denounced in meetings held in almost every state of the Union. Washington's powers as President had the fullest public support. Genêt, undeterred, sent a report of his case, with a demand that it be presented to the Congress, to Jefferson, and Jefferson handed the papers to Washington.

"I am giving you this demand of Genêt's for a congressional inquiry as a matter of form," he told the President. "But I have already told Genêt not once but many times that there is no appeal from the President's decision in such affairs."

"Send it back to him with the same reply," said the President.

So Jefferson wrote Genêt, telling him that as an ambassador he could deal only with the President and not with the Congress. The letter was written on December 31, 1793, and it was Jefferson's last act as Secretary of State. He had postponed his temporary retirement at Washington's request to the very end of the year. He now wrote resigning his office, not for a temporary period but for good.

Washington reluctantly accepted the resignation and Thomas Jefferson packed his belongings and left Philadelphia.

The conclusion of Genêt's story is soon told. His own party in France had fallen out of favor, and a new minister arrived with instructions to arrest Genêt and send him back to France for trial.

Each day the guillotine in Paris was taking its terrible toll of human lives. Hundreds were decapitated between dawn and dusk to the cheers of the mob which now dominated the government of France. Genêt appealed to Washington for permission to remain in the United States. Washington readily agreed. He would not hear of Genêt being sent back to France to certain death.

The reckless, outrageous French ambassador who had helped bring about the resignation of Thomas Jefferson, who had heavily damaged Jefferson's policies and challenged the authority of the President, became a political refugee in the United States.

He did well for himself. He married the daughter of Governor

Clinton of New York, became a United States citizen and lived out the rest of his life in peace and prosperity. There are indications that when he was able to vote, he voted for Jefferson's Republicans.

In the midst of the furor over Genêt and the attacks on his character and his principles, his quarrels with Hamilton and his talks with Washington, Jefferson did not forget his two daughters and delighted to go shopping for things they needed.

Patsy wanted a kind of bonnet, called a calash, which was stretched over the head with hoops. Jefferson hunted around and found her one. Polly, who had finally got through *Don Quixote*, was rewarded with a particular kind of veil to be worn over a hat, and Jefferson had the milliner who sold it to him demonstrate how the veil was to be tied. He wrote Polly full details on wearing the veil with the precision with which he sent instructions to the country's ministers abroad.

"Observe that one of the strings is to be drawn tight around the root of the crown of the hat, and the veil then falling over the brim of the hat, is drawn by the lower string as tight or loose as you please around the neck," he wrote. "When the veil is not chosen to be drawn, the lower string is also tied around the root of the crown, so as to give the appearance of a puffed bandage for the hat."

There were no women in his household who could try the contraption out for him, so, thorough in all things, he tried it out for himself to be sure that the instructions were workable.

He bought a little hobby horse for his granddaughter Anne and told Patsy that Socrates himself would be delighted to ride around on the stick with the little girl. Sometimes Polly sent him a piece of cloth with an airy request that he send her several yards like it, and then he would go from one draper to another until the cloth was identified and the yardage sent off.

He could, of course, have used his servants for these shopping excursions, but undertaking them himself brought his home nearer to him and that was a great relief to him. He was busy, so busy that at times his head ached for nagging hours and he had to rest in his bed with a cold bandage over his eyes, but he was lonely, too, and he wanted to be with his daughters and in his home and among friends rather than enemies.

When he left for Monticello in January of 1794, he had amassed so much furniture and so many gifts for his daughters that a score of packing cases was needed to contain them and they were forwarded by boat to be off-loaded at Richmond on the James River.

He himself went overland, and arrived in Monticello to a tremendous welcome. Anne was three and talking in whole sentences which delighted Jefferson, who immediately demanded to know of the mother whether she was yet beginning to write. He had a grandson of sixteen months who had been named Thomas Jefferson Randolph.

In the previous spring some mockingbirds had nested in the new trees around Monticello, and despite the January weather, he had to go out and look at the nests and warn everybody solemnly not to interfere with the birds whose singing delighted him. Later he tamed a mockingbird which would sit on his shoulder and flutter up the stairs after him.

But when he had time to go into the business of his estates, he found they had been badly farmed by paid overseers during his absence, and much of his best land was exhausted from over-cropping. To offset this, new land had been cleared of trees and was ready for cultivation. He owned a total of 10,000 acres, but only 2,000 acres could be laid out in crops, the rest being woodland. He had 154 slaves to feed and care for as well as his own family. The farms around Monticello were not producing enough to take care of his responsibilities.

The corn crop had failed due to a summer drought. The same drought had heavily damaged his fruit trees. Everything needed his personal attention and his bank account was exhausted. He had had to mortgage his lands to pay the expenses at Monticello and also his own expenses in Philadelphia. And when he came home he found that he was so heavily in debt that he could not even borrow fifty dollars which he needed to buy a few sheep to put out to graze on the poorer land of his estates.

But these were the kind of problems that Jefferson liked to tackle. There was a challenge before him—could he wrest enough from the land to feed and clothe all who depended on him, with a surplus left over to pay off his heavy debts? He threw himself into his work with all his energy, and though he

had arrived from Philadelphia tired, his red hair tinged with gray, the harder he worked at Monticello the younger he seemed to get.

To restore fertility to his lands he decided to rotate the crops. He divided his land into six fields, each in turn to be planted with wheat, corn, potatoes, and peas, rye, clover, and then allowed to lie unproductive for a year. This rotation of crops, as it was called, had been introduced in England with great success.

Jefferson had read of it in the English papers, and received letters about it from English friends, and he was one of the first American farmers to try the method. He had plenty of animals on his estates: thirty-four horses, eight of them for riding, 249 head of cattle and 390 hogs. These provided fertilizer and he experimented with compost heaps of vegetable matter to provide more fertilizer for his fields. By spring, he had the fifty dollars he needed to buy some sheep. He planted peas in March, and Patsy served him the first of the crop six weeks later, which delighted him.

"Where else can you get a return like that?" he demanded as the silver dish of steaming fresh peas was put before him on the table. "A bushel of peas planted and we shall have enough to last us the year, either fresh or preserved."

"Don't like peas," said his little granddaughter Anne, destroying a little of his triumph.

"You shall have strawberries in May. I know you'll like them," said Jefferson, "and next year spring lamb of our own raising."

In the months that followed Jefferson spent the greater part of each day on horseback. He breakfasted at dawn, mounted his horse and rode around his estates personally supervising all the work that was being carried on. He returned for a meal at about two in the afternoon, and then received any visitors who dropped in on him. Dinner was served at six in the evening and he went to bed at eight each night.

He loved riding and would ride only the most spirited animals. He rode so well that even Washington, a harsh judge of horseflesh and riders, admired him. His favorite horse was a roan gelding which no one else could ride and it took Jefferson several weeks before he had the gelding gentle. Then he would ride no other. Sometimes he persuaded Patsy to let him take little Anne

on his saddle, as indeed he had taken Patsy when she was a little girl. In dealing with his children and grandchildren he tried to apply the test of reason to all their requests, but he usually ended up doing what they asked.

There had been no plowing or preparation of the land at Monticello in the fall of 1793, so there was not much of a harvest in 1794. The pace Jefferson set for himself was more than he could handle at fifty years of age. He was out in all weathers and in September 1794 suffered such an attack of rheumatism that he had to go to bed for several days. But he was enjoying himself, and what he enjoyed most was the complete retirement from public affairs.

He wrote to Vice President John Adams, "I return to farming with an ardor which I scarcely knew in my youth and which has got the better entirely of my love of study. Instead of writing ten or twelve letters a day, which I have been in the habit of doing as a matter of course, I put off answering my letters now, farmer-like, till a rainy day, and then find them sometimes postponed by other necessary occupations."

He would allow no newspapers in Monticello, for he did not want to be reminded of political problems, and he informed Secretary of War Knox that the day might come when he would banish pen and paper and ink from Monticello and never write another line.

And yet, happy though he was, he was pushing himself too hard and his health started to give way under the strain. The attack of rheumatism was followed by a heavy cold and then fever. Jefferson began to think that he had not long to live and worried about what would happen to his family if he died. He wrote to Madison that his age demanded that he get his affairs in a good condition. He welcomed visitors, begged Madison and others to come and see him, but he warned them not to expect any political talk.

"Be prepared to talk farming," he said. "I don't want to talk of anything else."

Meanwhile, Washington was having trouble with his Cabinet. Edmund Randolph was not a satisfactory substitute for Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of State. The British were stirring up trouble with the Indians on the western frontier. Relations with

France were deteriorating so that now there was danger of war with France, no longer a republic but a dictatorship under the control of a man with the curious name of Napoleon Bonaparte.

United States trade down the Mississippi was cut off at New Orleans by Spain. Jefferson, while in office, had sent a mission to Madrid to negotiate for the use of the port of New Orleans for American goods, but nothing had come of it. Washington wondered whether Jefferson, always vitally interested in the western frontier and still dreaming of a nation that extended to the Pacific, would undertake a short mission to Spain to negotiate the New Orleans question. Secretary of State Edmund Randolph wrote asking Jefferson whether he would accept the appointment to Madrid.

"No circumstances, my dear sir, will ever more tempt me to engage in anything public," Jefferson wrote back in reply. And that was the end of that.

Madison tried to coax him back into public office and Edward Rutledge also. But he would not be moved from Monticello.

But in 1796 Washington's second term expired and he announced that he would not serve a third term. A new President had to be elected. John Adams, Vice President and Federalist, was an obvious candidate. Who then would be the Republican candidate? There was only one man of presidential stature on the Republican side in the country, Thomas Jefferson.

42

At the time of the Revolution, the greatest number of people in the country were of English ancestry, though there was a significant sprinkling of Scotch and Irish among them—the Irish none too popular for they were Roman Catholics in a Protestant nonconformist country. Nonetheless three of the men who signed the Declaration of Independence—James Smith, Matthew Thornton and George Taylor—were born in Ireland. And six of

Washington's generals were also born in Ireland, including General Richard Montgomery, who had died in a futile but heroic attempt to seize Quebec. These facts have a bearing on what was to occur later.

Now many more Irishmen came and with them, too, Englishmen and other Europeans, drawn to the United States by the hope of a better life with more freedom. And for the first time in the country there began to be some stirrings of dislike for aliens who, it was thought, would bring in foreign ideas and perhaps threaten the freedom of the people.

Among the immigrants was a Swiss named Albert Gallatin. He came of an aristocratic and wealthy family in Switzerland, but gave up his home and his fortune to migrate to America, attracted by the freedom of the country. In his youth he had often met the great French philosopher Voltaire, in exile in Switzerland, and learned from Voltaire to love freedom and hate tyranny. He was a brilliant student both of mathematics and languages and ran away from home to go to America. He landed in Boston, migrated to Maine where he lived for a while in a wilderness cabin, taught French at Harvard and then went to Virginia.

The wealthy Virginians loved learning and loved Gallatin. Patrick Henry, who didn't love learning, and would cheerfully renounce the whole of Latin grammar for a running shot at a deer, met Gallatin and advised him to go west.

"Get out to the frontier," he said. "That's where the true freedom is. There's nothing around here but lawbooks now." He shook his head over Gallatin's learning and grumbled that he would probably become a statesman—a fate that appalled Patrick Henry, who had hardly more love of American politicians than he had had of the British politicians who preceded them. He had quarreled with his old friend Thomas Jefferson, and now sneered at Jefferson's fondness for France and French cooking, saying that he had "abjured his native vittles."

Washington also met Gallatin and was so impressed by his learning and industry that he offered him the position of his land agent, but Gallatin refused the offer. He met Thomas Jefferson briefly and agreed with every detail of Jefferson's political phi-

losophy. He had been a republican before he left Geneva and he remained a republican the rest of his life.

Gallatin took Patrick Henry's advice and migrated to the Pennsylvania wilderness to speculate in land. He was soon prominent in his community and people began to say that he would be a good man to represent them in Congress.

Meanwhile Jefferson was farming at Monticello. He took no newspapers. He got his information on public affairs only from visitors and from letters. And then, in the election year of 1796, Madison who had sounded him out several times without success about returning to public life, devised a bold plan. He wanted Jefferson to run for the Presidency in competition with Vice President John Adams. Madison knew, however, that if he asked Jefferson to run for the Presidency, Jefferson would refuse. He decided then to make Jefferson a candidate without obtaining Jefferson's consent. Soon articles were appearing in the Republican newspapers, many of them written by Madison and his friends, suggesting that Thomas Jefferson should run for the Presidency. In a little while the tone of these articles changed to make it plain that Jefferson *was* running for the Presidency, but Madison was careful not to put to Jefferson the question of whether he would run or not. Popular support for Jefferson's candidacy soon made itself felt, particularly in the southern states.

Jefferson continued farming, and ignored the situation. He was not unaware, however, that Madison was pushing him as a presidential candidate, but he made no speech on his own behalf and wrote no letters. He would not even leave Monticello, although John Adams, his opponent, was doing all he could to win votes. Jefferson's major interest continued to be getting more of his land under cultivation. He worked out a design for a new plow over which he was very excited, and he had at last started a nailery at Monticello to make the nails which he found so expensive to buy. He thought of manufacturing potash for fertilizer but had not enough capital to start such a business. He was still money-poor and his six-year system of rotating crops would not bring any real results for at least a decade.

But money did not greatly concern him because he believed it but a token; the real riches of life were to be obtained from the

soil. He raised his own meat and his own cereals and his own fish out of a specially stocked lake. Fruit came from his own trees, and wool for clothing from his own sheep.

While the political world then was loud in its arguments about Federalism and Republicanism, France and Britain, banks and paper money, customs, excises and taxes, Jefferson was pondering over the uses to which steam engines could be put in private homes. He thought that using a kitchen fire, a steam engine could be devised to pump water to a cistern on the roof, where it would be available for household use and would be a protection in case of fire.

When visitors remonstrated gently with him over his lack of interest in public affairs, he protested that he was vitally interested in public affairs. "A man who introduces a new plant useful as food into his country is a far greater public benefactor than the most successful of politicians," he said.

"And as for public affairs, if my plow is successful, it would double the acreage which can be plowed in any season, and thus double the nation's potential food supply. That, I assure you, will be remembered long after the politics of today are forgotten. No, my good sir, the work that is worth doing in the building of our society lies in the fields of agriculture and of science."

And so while Madison and Robert R. Livingston and other Republicans pushed Jefferson's candidacy for the Presidency, Jefferson went on making nails and toying with steam engines and devising a plan for central heating for Monticello which would eliminate dependency on fireplaces. He worked in the fields with his own slaves, getting in the harvest, and he instructed the more intelligent of them in various crafts, so that some were cabinetmakers and others bricklayers and others could operate a wood lathe. To set them free unskilled would be to set them free to starve. So he taught them a trade by which they could earn a living when he gave them their freedom, for he intended to free them. The womenfolk among them he put to spinning cloth from his own wool for clothing for the others, and while the storm of the presidential election raged over the country, Jefferson was making a little model republic out of Monticello.

Of this tiny republic of 10,000 acres he was already the presi-

dent, and every citizen of the Republic of Monticello, for such it could be called, had a respected place in society and useful work to do. Jefferson hated to employ men, even slaves, in nonproductive labor. He fitted the house with dumb-waiters, so that food could be brought from the kitchen to the dining room without somebody having to carry it. Besides his nailery he had a blacksmith's shop and a cabinetmaker's shop and a carpenter's shop and a bricklayer's yard. He studied how to make locks and taught some of his Negroes the craft of lockmaking and key cutting, so that everybody at Monticello had a stake in the place.

And yet every now and again, Jefferson would make a statement about national affairs of the country that provided a rallying point for his own supporters. He wrote to Aaron Burr when the country was divided between pro-French and pro-British factions, "We owe gratitude to France, justice to England, good-will to all and subservience to none." In that sentence he summed up what was later to be his own policy in foreign affairs.

The time came at last when Madison felt that he ought to report to Jefferson on the progress of the unauthorized campaign to make him President of the United States. In those days, when there was no organization of political parties such as exists now, the Presidency was awarded the candidate who got the most votes in the Electoral College, the Vice Presidency going to the second highest. Since Adams was a declared candidate for the Presidency and had been actively campaigning for the office, it appeared that he would win, though for a while there was a prospect of a tie in the number of votes won by Adams and Jefferson.

Madison wrote to Jefferson hinting at a tie and Jefferson replied, "There is nothing I so anxiously hope, as that my name may come out either second or third. These would be indifferent to me, as the last would leave me at home the whole year, and the other two-thirds of it."

When the votes were finally counted, Adams had won the election, but by a margin of only three votes—71 to 68. Jefferson wrote to him immediately congratulating him on his election.

"I have never one single moment expected a different issue," he wrote, "and although I know I shall not be believed, yet it is none the less true that I have never wished it."

On February 20, 1797, Jefferson set out for Philadelphia to take up public life again, not as Secretary of State, but as Vice President in the administration of John Adams.

43

JEFFERSON'S term as Vice President of the United States was spent in achieving a great deal by doing very little. Nobody then was quite sure just how much power the Vice President had. It was laid down that he should preside over the Senate and of course he would take over the Presidency in case of the death of the President. But presiding over the Senate was hardly a full-time occupation for a man of the caliber of Thomas Jefferson. And roly-poly President Adams, who was called "Mr. Rotundity" because of his little round head and pudgy figure, was in excellent health. When he went to Philadelphia as Vice President, Jefferson believed he would not have very much to do and would be able to spend a considerable amount of his time at Monticello.

Perhaps he might have been able to do so but for the mounting speed of the crises into which the country was headed. Relations with France had so deteriorated that there was a fever through the country for war with France to protect American shipping. The Federalist Party was in power and its policy was anti-French. Jefferson watched while a public furor against the French, and by extension all foreigners, gripped the nation.

Alexander Hamilton had retired as Secretary of the Treasury in January of 1795. He was now practicing law in New York. But while he had retired from the Cabinet he had not retired from politics. Behind the scenes, Hamilton was fighting to gain control of the Federal party from Adams. And very soon Jefferson discovered that Hamilton, from his New York law office, was actually running the Cabinet and the government.

The Secretary of State was Thomas Pickering—a cold, stern, puritanical man who had, through his brother's influence, become Postmaster General under Washington. That position brought

him into contact with Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton, before his retirement, won him over and rewarded him with promotions, finally transferring him from the Post Office to the State Department. Thomas Pickering was John Adams' Secretary of State but he was Alexander Hamilton's man.

The Secretary of the Treasury was Oliver Wolcott, who had been appointed auditor of the Treasury Department by Hamilton. Soon Hamilton had promoted him to Comptroller of the Treasury. When Hamilton retired, Washington appointed Wolcott Secretary of the Treasury in his stead and John Adams let him remain in the post. And as with Pickering, Wolcott may have been Adams' Secretary of the Treasury but he was Hamilton's man.

Secretary of War James McHenry, an immigrant from Ireland, also owed his position to Hamilton's influence, or thought he did, and, too, was a Hamilton man. He owed nothing whatever to John Adams. The fourth member of the Cabinet, the Attorney General, had little influence on national affairs.

The Cabinet in his hands, Hamilton also had a strong following in the Congress; so, from his New York law office, unknown to John Adams, Hamilton manipulated the government of the United States to give effect to his policies rather than those of Adams.

Hamilton had, of course, opposition. His great opponent in the Congress was the young Swiss immigrant, Albert Gallatin. Gallatin proved himself such a master of finance that in his first term he was challenging, blocking and even defeating many of the financial measures that Hamilton wished the Congress to pass.

President John Adams in his message to Congress reviewed the threat of war with France, announced plans for a new attempt at negotiations and meanwhile urged that the country arm itself. A stormy debate broke out in the Congress immediately on framing the reply to the President's address.

The Federalists, who were for war, were for denouncing the message as too conciliatory to France. The Democratic-Republicans, who were for peace, thought the language of the President's message gave unnecessary offense to France. The debate raged for several days and members were not above flinging insults at each other.

Gallatin was criticized on the grounds of his foreign accent and birth, and another member criticized Matthew Lyon, a Vermont Republican, for his humble origin. He was an Irish immigrant. Lyon replied that he rejoiced that he was not descended from "Puritans who punish their horses for breaking the sabbath or from those who persecuted the Quakers and burned the witches." Eventually Lyon and Roswell Griswold, a Federalist, got into a fight on the floor of the Congress. Griswold beat Lyon on the head with a hickory stick and Lyon defended himself by snatching up the coal tongs. The two clinched and rolled on the floor of the House and were finally separated by their colleagues.

War fever was coupled, then, with distrust of foreigners, and it certainly seemed significant to the Federalists that many who supported Jefferson were of recent foreign extraction. When Adams' mission to France, aimed at ridding American ships of search and seizure by French shipping, failed, he turned to his Cabinet for advice on the next step to take.

His Cabinet made contact with Hamilton and gave the President Hamilton's recommendations. Hamilton did not propose a declaration of war on France, but a preparation for immediate war. Merchant vessels should be sent to sea armed, a standing army of 16,000 men should be recruited, a navy should be built, the old French treaty should be broken and the tax system should be put on a war basis.

There should not be an alliance with England but perhaps Britain might agree to convoy American shipping. Adams recommended such measures to the House, not knowing that he was putting Hamilton's policies into effect. The House voted the necessary legislation and overnight the country was on the verge of war with France.

Jefferson, of course, was to blame for this foreign menace and bands took to playing "The Rogues March" outside his house in Philadelphia. He appeared unperturbed, never went out into society and dined only with friends from the Philosophical Society, with whom he could discuss such fascinating news as the discovery in Greenbriar County of the bones of a lion-like creature whose claws were eight inches long. The creature was given the name of *Megalonyx Jeffersoni* and Jefferson wondered whether any specimens were still living in the unexplored Ameri-

can West. He also found that a young surveyor was going into the plains beyond the Mississippi, where the Indians reported there were herds of wild horses. He begged the young man to make extensive notes on the wild-horse herds, for such herds he believed would soon be extinct.

Jefferson's seeming unconcern over the rush to war and the hostility to foreigners that was sweeping the country was calculated. He was putting a theory of his own to the test. The theory was that the people themselves, once they were possessed of the facts, would undo any harm being done. Let the Federalists have their day. Let them have their friendship with England and their war against France. Let them persecute unfortunate aliens. Eventually the country would awaken to the terrible injustices that were being done and wipe the Federalists out. That would be the end of the Federalist Party with its distrust of the mass of society and its leaning toward an aristocratic form of government.

Two acts were now rushed through the Congress against the advice of the wiser of the Federalists. The Alien Act authorized the President to expel, without hearing or trial, any alien he judged "dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States," or had "reasonable grounds to suspect is concerned in any treasonable or secret machinations against the government." Under the act, any alien could be deported on suspicion alone!

The Sedition Act provided for a fine of up to $2,000 and imprisonment of not more than two years for the writing, printing, uttering or publishing of "any false, scandalous, and malicious writing or writings against the government of the United States . . . with intent to defame . . . the good people of the United States or to stir up sedition within the United States, or to excite any unlawful combinations therein." The Sedition Act in effect abolished the Bill of Rights. When it came before the Senate, Jefferson presided over the debate without interfering on one side or the other. He did not believe the country would tolerate the act if it became law and the passage of the act seemed to him the first step in the suicide of the Federalist Party. Hamilton himself opposed these two acts.

"Let us not establish a tyranny," he pleaded. "Energy is a very different thing from violence." But the country in its hysteria would not listen to Hamilton. Jefferson's comment was, "I con-

sider these laws as merely an experiment on the American mind to see how far it will bear an avowed violation of the Constitution." In short, Jefferson wanted to see just how republican were the citizens of the republic of the United States of America.

He believed that for a while a Federalist reign of terror would engulf the United States as a republican reign of terror had engulfed France.

It was not hard to predict who would be the first victim of the Sedition Act. He was none other than Matthew Lyon, the outspoken ex-officer in Washington's army who was a strong supporter of Thomas Jefferson and had been in a fight with Griswold on the floor of the Congress. Lyon was charged with intent "to stir up sedition, and to bring the President and government . . . into contempt."

All that Lyon had actually done was criticize President Adams, whom he said he could not support because he was surrounded by people who put aside the public welfare in their grasp for power. He also criticized Adams for "ridiculous pomp, foolish adulation, and selfish avarice."

Lyon was not a man to moderate his tongue but nothing he said could be reasonably interpreted as treasonable. Nonetheless he was brought before a justice of the Supreme Court, tried and found guilty under the Sedition Act. During his trial Lyon would not back down in the slightest from his criticism of the President and the government. He declared that the Sedition Act was unconstitutional and that everything he had said was true. He even asked the judge point blank whether he had not often dined at the President's table and observed his "ridiculous pomp and parade." The judge said he hadn't. The jury convicted Lyon, sentenced him to four months in prison and a fine of $1,000.

The conviction shocked the whole nation except the most ardent of the Federalists. "A curious sport," quipped James Madison, who was visiting Jefferson in Philadelphia. "The Romans are devouring the Lyons and claiming all is done on behalf of the Christians."

"I suppose," said Jefferson, "that there is a kind of genius of stupidity as well as a genius of intelligence. The arrest and conviction of Lyon in that case is a masterpiece of blundering. I can

think of nothing these extremists could do which would injure their cause more."

"Do you propose to speak out against these measures?" asked Madison.

"The measures will speak out against themselves," replied Jefferson. "No words of mine will have half their eloquence. When I was a young man, practicing law, I defended a slave who was a slave only because of a social offense by his great-grandmother. I was horrified when the man who instructed me in law, George Wythe, appeared against me and secured from the court a verdict that kept my client in slavery for the misdeeds of his great-grandmother. I remonstrated with Mr. Wythe for taking such a case. He replied that it was not the function of a lawyer to change laws. A lawyer best served the public by demonstrating the effect of laws.

"I believe that that case had a great influence on mitigating the laws governing slaves in Virginia. No, Mr. Madison, all we have to do is sit quiet while the Federalists first build a coffin for their party and then close the lid on it."

Shocking as was the conviction of Lyon, what followed was just as bad. A little while later Anthony Hazwell printed an advertisement in his newspaper, the *Vermont Gazette*. The advertisement was paid for by Lyon and publicized a lottery to raise money to pay his fine.

It stated that Lyon was "holden by the oppressive hand of usurpt power in a loathsome prison, deprived almost of the right of reason and suffering all the indignities which can be heaped on him by a hard-hearted savage who has, to the disgrace of Federalism, been elevated to a station where he can satiate his barbarity on the misery of his victim."

The wording was Lyon's and the rigors of jail obviously hadn't curbed his tongue. The same judge who had convicted Lyon convicted Hazwell. Hazwell produced evidence to prove that Lyon was being brutally treated in jail. This did not impress the judge or the jury. Hazwell was fined $200 and sentenced to two months' confinement. He was the father of seventeen children and he was born in England.

The first two victims of the Sedition Act then were both foreign-born. "We witness some strange matters indeed," said

Jefferson. "England comes to the defense of Ireland and both are jailed in America."

The next major victim of the Act was also English-born. He was Thomas Cooper, who edited a pro-Jefferson paper and was both an educator and a scientist. He was a friend also of Jefferson's, and he criticized President Adams for saddling the people with a permanent navy, borrowing money at 8 per cent when lower rates were to be had, and for public expressions which, Cooper felt, had aggravated the position with France. Cooper was hustled into court where he undertook to defend himself but his defense was of no avail. The judge, Justice Samuel Chase, was so partial as to attack Cooper's statements without evidence to support the attack, and Cooper was sent to prison for six months and fined $200.

It was Scotland's turn next. In Richmond, Virginia, James Thomson Callendar, a Scottish-born writer, was indicted for criticizing the President. Three of Virginia's greatest lawyers, all friends of Jefferson's, volunteered to defend him. They were Thomas Nicholas, William Wirt and George Hay. They appeared before the same Justice Chase who had imprisoned Cooper. He cut the lawyers off during their addresses, ordered them about and bullied them into frustration. Callendar was sentenced to nine months in jail and fined $200.

Jefferson's friends, now thoroughly alarmed, asked him to intervene, or at least publicly head the growing opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts. Publicly Jefferson would do nothing. From his viewpoint it was essential that the nation itself awake to the injustice of the two acts and demand an end to the persecutions under them.

Privately, however, Jefferson helped to organize a fund-raising campaign to free Matthew Lyon. The campaign was so popular that $1,000 in gold and a similar amount in silver was raised. Lyon, his fine paid, was set free and departed immediately for Philadelphia to take his seat in the Congress to which he had been re-elected. He was given a hero's welcome in every town he went through, and at times a procession several miles long followed his sleigh, for he was freed in midwinter.

Jefferson had been carefully devising a plan to rid the country of the oppressive legislation. When Congress adjourned in 1798,

he returned to Monticello and had a meeting there of his friends, including W. C. Nicholas of Virginia and John Breckenridge. They talked about the Alien and Sedition Acts and Jefferson made a few points concerning the powers of the federal government.

"There are three points concerning the federal government which should be borne in mind," he said. "The first is that the federal government was created by the individual states. The second is that the federal government is the agent of the states which created it. The third which follows from these two is that the states have perfect authority to criticize the actions of the federal government and they may also void the actions of the federal government they hold unconstitutional."

"Surely," cried Nicholas, "you are not advocating a doctrine which would make the states superior to the federal government?"

"We are not concerned here with a matter of sovereignty but with the deeper matter of liberty," said Jefferson. "Liberty is still guaranteed in our Constitution and particularly in our Bill of Rights. If the federal government falls into the error of denying the Bill of Rights by passing legislation like the Alien and Sedition Acts, the state governments are not obliged to fall into the same error. Rather it is their duty to point to the error and demand by resolutions in their own legislatures that the error be abolished.

"We will have fallen on sad times when we entrust our liberty to a vast central agency and neglect to keep a guard on it ourselves. Neglect of liberty is the first step toward loss of liberty."

The result of this conference was that, with Jefferson's aid, a resolution was drawn up, in effect asserting the right of the states to nullify unconstitutional actions of the federal government. It was presented by Breckenridge to the Kentucky legislature and adopted with enthusiasm. The Kentucky resolution contained a threat of secession if the federal government continued to act in a manner judged tyrannical.

A similar resolution, though somewhat watered down, was passed in the Virginia legislature. The doctrine of State's Rights had been proclaimed by Thomas Jefferson. He could not foresee that, by an unwarranted extension, it would eventually lead to the Civil War.

44

WHILE the Federalists gleefully pushed their persecutions under the Alien and Sedition Acts in an attempt to stifle all opposition, the country went to war with France. The war was undeclared and waged only at sea. A United States squadron under Commodore John Barry went to the West Indies to protect American shipping and the French frigate *Insurgente* was forced to strike her colors after a brief action with the new United States frigate *Constellation.*

On land there was tremendous mobilization. Washington was called out of retirement to head a greatly expanded United States Army. Using Secretary of War McHenry as his agent, Hamilton got himself appointed second in command. Madison had told Jefferson many years before that Hamilton was ambitious to be a great military commander. When Jefferson heard of Hamilton's appointment, he recalled how on one occasion Hamilton had looked at three portraits displayed on the walls of Jefferson's office.

"Whose pictures are these?" Hamilton had asked.

"They are the portraits of the world's greatest men," said Jefferson. "Bacon, Newton and Locke."

Hamilton paused for some time and said, "The greatest man that ever lived was Julius Caesar."

"Perhaps," suggested Madison slyly, hearing of this anecdote, "Mr. Hamilton is intent on out-Caesaring Julius."

This big mobilization both of the navy and the army cost money. President Adams, still innocent of the fact that his Cabinet was largely controlled by Hamilton, found himself faced with the need of borrowing huge sums on the public credit to pay for the army and navy. But when he turned to the Federalist financiers, who had money to loan, they would offer it only at 8 per cent interest despite the national emergency.

Money borrowed meant taxes to make repayment and the taxes fell heaviest on the Republicans—small property owners who

could ill afford to pay. Adams' popularity began to wane, and when after some months no French invasion materialized (the Federalist press had been confidently predicting one), he found himself blamed for the tax burden and indeed for the whole war hysteria. Added to that, he was blamed also for the persecutions under the Alien and Sedition Acts. Without publicly moving a finger, Jefferson had allowed the Federalist Party to destroy itself.

Many wealthy Americans, not rabid Federalists, wondered just how vexed the situation between the United States and France really was. No one could deny that French ships had seized American merchantmen, but some began to feel that perhaps these grievances could be negotiated. Secret commissioners sent to France by Adams had not only been rebuffed but been told that America must pay money for France's good-will. The report these commissioners brought back when published greatly damaged Jefferson's position as a friend of France and aggravated the demand for war. Still some felt that a diplomatic approach might be possible. One day Dr. James Logan, an old friend of Jefferson's, called on him in Philadelphia.

"I am going on a private mission of my own to France," he said. "Could you give me letters to some of your friends in Paris?"

"By all means," said Jefferson. "I presume you are indeed traveling as a private individual?"

"I am indeed," said Dr. Logan, "but I am also traveling as an American."

"It is possible," said Jefferson, "that as a private individual and an American you may be able to learn more about the French attitude toward ourselves than did our late commissioners."

"That is precisely what I have in mind, sir," said Dr. Logan.

He went and returned with the report that the French government—no longer a republic—was anxious for peace. Others undertook similar missions and were not long in telling President Adams that France by no means desired war with the United States.

Then came a letter to President Adams from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs saying that the French government would receive with every respect any minister sent to negotiate the

differences which existed with the United States. Adams informed the Congress, the war hysteria died away, and a commissioner was sent to France to negotiate a peace, but the damage to the Federalist Party had been done, and ahead loomed the election of a new President.

President Adams, so long deceived about his Cabinet ministers, tried to put his house in order. He was a self-important little man, but nonetheless a man of great character. He had had the courage to defend the British soldiers on trial for the Boston massacre in the days before the Revolution. He had been the Samson of New England in bringing about the independence of the nation, and Jefferson, who differed with him politically, nonetheless admired him tremendously. Adams now asked Secretary of War McHenry for his resignation. McHenry resigned and Samuel Dexter was appointed in his stead.

He asked for the resignation of his Secretary of State, but Pickering refused to resign. Adams discharged him and replaced him with John Marshall. These Cabinet shake-ups came too late, however, to help President Adams in the coming election.

The names of two men were soon before the public for the Presidency—Aaron Burr and Thomas Jefferson. Both were Republicans: Burr enormously popular in the northern states where he had made out of the Tammany society a political machine that was to influence American politics for the next 200 years, and Jefferson, popular all over the country as the champion of the little man.

The election campaign that followed was one of the most vicious ever conducted in the country. The Federalists were hopelessly split between supporters of Adams and supporters of Hamilton. They united only in denouncing Jefferson. He was condemned as an atheist, as an anarchist and as a man who, if elected, would plunge the country into the kind of bloody revolution which had deluged France.

Jefferson had once written advocating religious tolerance, "It does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg." William Linn, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, quoted this saying in a pamphlet designed to prove Jefferson an atheist. Others of the clergy took up the attack. The Reverend Cotton

Mather Smith of Massachusetts accused Jefferson of accumulating his property by robbing a widow and fatherless children while acting as executor of their estate, while another said that Jefferson on passing a dilapidated church had sneered, "It is good enough for Him who was born in a manger."

To all such accusations and slanders Jefferson remained silent. But if Jefferson was silent, his friends were not and he had many of them. There was first of all James Madison, then Senator James Monroe of Virginia, and then Congressman Robert R. Livingston of New York and Congressmen Albert Gallatin and Thomas McKean of Pennsylvania. And besides these, hundreds of thousands of Americans whose names Jefferson never knew but who knew that Tom Jefferson alone would defend their rights.

While the campaign raged about the nation, Jefferson returned to Monticello, took up again the management of his estates and enjoyed having his family around him.

The family was growing. He had two grandchildren and now Polly had married a childhood friend, John Wayles Eppes, who was her cousin. Jefferson, unable to refrain from giving Polly a few words of advice on marriage, told her, "Harmony is the first object to be aimed at. Nothing can preserve affection but a determination in husband and wife to consider the love of the other as of more value than any other object whatever. If the advice I give you is the means of saving you from a single heartache it will have contributed a great deal to my happiness."

He brought back to Monticello not voluminous papers to be studied but toys for his grandchildren. The summer went happily. He left Monticello only once to pay a visit to some friends in nearby Bedford. Madison visited him and Jefferson refused to say a word about politics. They rode together around the Monticello estate and talked about gardening and the weather.

By July, Jefferson had finished getting in the harvest and on July the Fourth of 1800, the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson was trying out a new Forte Piano (as a pianoforte was then called) and had decided that it was a much better instrument than his harpsichord. It had had a rough journey to Monticello and while the country was concerned about whether he or Aaron Burr would be the next President, Jefferson was tuning his new instrument.

That wonderful summer which gave Thomas Jefferson the heaviest wheat crop he had been able to harvest at Monticello also brought him a tremendous harvest of votes. He made no speeches and went on no tours but when at last all the votes were counted the result was a tie. Seventy-three votes for Jefferson and seventy-three for Burr. Adams had gained only sixty-five.

When Adams heard the result of the voting, he said, "I understand you are to beat me in this contest and I will only say that I will be as faithful a subject as any you will have." To Jefferson it seemed that Adams was taking the matter personally. For him the election was not a matter of individuals but of individual principles.

"Mr. Adams," he said, "there is no personal contest between you and me. Two systems of principles on the subject of government divide our fellow citizens into two parties. Were we both to die today, tomorrow there would be two other names in place of ours."

"I believe you are right," said Adams. "We are but passive instruments and should not suffer this matter to affect our personal dispositions."

But Adams was hurt.

With a tie in the Electoral College between Jefferson and Burr, the matter of who should be President was put to a vote of the House of Representatives.

The balloting started on the 11th of February, 1801, in a raging snowstorm and in the new city of Washington, D. C. Ballot followed ballot without the tie being broken.

One Congressman, Joseph H. Nicholson of Maryland, though desperately ill, was carried in a litter through the snow to the Capitol to vote. He remained all day and as each ballot was taken scribbled Jefferson's name on the slip given him.

The first day brought no decision. The second day brought no decision. The balloting continued for a week still with deadlock. Jefferson, living in a boardinghouse, wrote to Polly saying how much he missed her and Patsy. "I feel a sincere wish indeed to see our government brought back to its Republican principles, to see that kind of government firmly fixed to which my whole life has been devoted. I hope we shall now see it so established as that when I retire it may be under full security that we are to continue free and happy."

Tremendous pressure was now put on Jefferson to promise a few political favors in return for enough votes to give him the Presidency. Adams came to him and said, "You have only to say you will do justice to the public creditors, maintain the navy, and not disturb those holding office and the government will instantly be put into your hands."

Jefferson said, scarcely raising his voice, "I will not come into the government by capitulation."

There were some thirty members of the Congress staying at the boardinghouse where Jefferson was living, and although Jefferson was Vice President and likely to be President, he sat anywhere at the dining table there was room for him. Somebody suggested that he should be seated at the head of the table but one of the Republican Congressmen replied, "Mr. Jefferson must not be allowed to forget that he is one of the people and that all are equal."

The reply suited Jefferson.

It was not until February 7, 1801, that the deadlock in the House was broken. Thirty-six ballots had been taken before enough votes were given Jefferson to elect him President of the United States of America.

When the news was brought to him he was standing by a window of one of the public rooms at the boardinghouse. He made no immediate comment but looked out the window to see that the snow had stopped falling and the landscape was glittering under the sunshine.

"The gales of spring are over," he said at last.

"I beg your pardon?" said the messenger.

"You would not understand, my friend, but Mr. Madison would."

There would be now, he thought, a republican summer for the whole nation.

TIME OF THE HARVEST
1801–1826

45

A COLD BUT DRYING WIND, out of the east, had been blowing over the streets of Washington, D.C. for a week, so that on the morning of March 4, 1801, much of the mud had hardened and on several streets it was possible to walk without being spattered by a mud shower from the wheels of carriages and drays. Thomas Jefferson had, following the habit of a lifetime, been up at dawn on that day. He had noted the temperature of a thermometer hung outside the window of his bedroom in Canaird's boardinghouse, where he was staying, and had written down the reading in a book that he kept for these kinds of observations. He had poured a basin of cold water out from a jug which stood on the washstand in his bedroom, and in this he had soaked his feet for five minutes—also according to custom.

The day promised sunshine and that pleased him, and he selected his wardrobe with a little extra care, though he was particular about his dress on all occasions, concerned about never appearing overdressed and never dressing in a slovenly manner, both of which he held ungentlemanly. He decided, since it was March and the sun was likely to shine, that he would wear a pair of green knee breeches and a green jacket, which would provide the right touch of spring. And to tone these colors down, he would wear gray stockings and a gray waistcoat and his best black shoes.

In addition to the touch of spring in the air, there was another reason for the care that Thomas Jefferson gave to the selection of his wardrobe on that morning. He was to be sworn in that day as President of the United States of America. That this should be so seemed to him, as he dressed in the bedroom of a Washington boardinghouse, quite unreal. It didn't seem so very long ago that

he had sat down, alone, in another boardinghouse, though in Philadelphia, to write the document which was to be called the Declaration of Independence and which brought into being the nation of which he was now to become President.

It was strange too that although he would be the third President of the United States, he would be the first to take up office in the new capital of Washington. It was he, Thomas Jefferson, who had been the prime mover in bringing this capital into being. And although many criticized the site and denounced the climate as one that would test human endurance to the limit, summer and winter, politically the new capital was situated in the ideal place —on territory that was both northern and southern. For already the United States was divided between North and South, and Jefferson knew that it was important that the capital of the country be in a location that neither could claim as its own.

When Jefferson finished dressing, he went to the dining room of the boardinghouse, where the other guests were waiting for his appearance to start breakfast. There was one large common table and several smaller tables in the dining room, and Jefferson always sat at the large table and at any place that was vacant. On this morning the other guests tried to get him to sit at the head of the table, since in a matter of hours he would be President of the United States. But he refused this honor.

"I am to become President of a republic, gentlemen," he said. "Not the sovereign of a kingdom."

There were no close friends of Jefferson's present at that breakfast, nor waiting on him until noon when he would go to the Capitol building to be sworn in. But someone thought about how Jefferson was to get to the Capitol and asked whether a carriage had been arranged for him.

"No," said Jefferson. "I don't wish a carriage."

"You'll ride then?"

"No," said the President-elect. "I'll walk. The distance is less than half a mile and the streets dry."

Walk? That would be a novelty. Washington had ridden to his inauguration in a gilded coach drawn by beautiful black horses, and Adams had done likewise, with a postilion on his horse, but Tom Jefferson would walk along the broad sidewalks to the unfinished Capitol, rubbing shoulders with his fellow citizens and

passing the time of day with whoever stopped to wish him well. He was Mr. Republic indeed, this gangling, red-haired, fifty-eight-year-old offspring of some of the most aristocratic families in Virginia.

Walk he did, not attended by some of the greatest men in the land, but by some of the Congressmen staying at the boarding-house and a throng of people he met in the streets—carters and shopkeepers and loiterers and trappers and builders who clumped along with him to see what it was like when a President of the United States was sworn into office. And that was the way he arrived at the steps of the Capitol, looking in his green suit rather like a red-headed grasshopper.

There was a palisade around the Capitol building and here the crowd left him and he went up the steps and entered the Senate Chambers to be sworn in with only one or two close friends for company. John Marshall, Chief Justice of the United States, was there waiting to administer the oath, and Aaron Burr, Vice President-elect.

Whatever Burr's thoughts, he came forward eagerly to shake Jefferson's hand, and Marshall, who was to administer the oath and was a political opponent of Jefferson's, was also smiling. Those who knew the three men well—Jefferson, Burr and Marshall—sensed trouble. Burr was ambitious, and Marshall's convictions ran as deep as Jefferson's and often counter to Jefferson's.

The inauguration was not very impressive. Though it had dignity, it had little show, and the hostility of Jefferson's political opposition was evident in the fact that few had stayed to see him sworn in as President.

Ex-President John Adams had left the Capitol without even taking leave of Jefferson, who had been his Vice President. Jefferson, he believed, with his "leveling" notions would ruin the country.

Adams' Cabinet had also gone to their homes, and so also had most of the Senators and Congressmen who were of the Federalist Party. All these men viewed Jefferson's election as a disaster that would put the government of the nation in the hands of shiftless, moneyless people of no property. And France provided a horrible example of what could result from that kind of government. So these people expected nothing but ruin, and left.

It was now up to President Jefferson to demonstrate that common people, whether they owned property or not, were capable of efficient and selfless government, and that as revolutionary a thing as a republic could provide the best government for all citizens.

Jefferson had prepared a speech aimed at soothing the bitterness that existed between Federalist and Republican, and when the oath had been administered, he beckoned the people to come nearer and took a piece of paper out of his pocket to make his speech. He was not a good speaker. His voice was high and thin and did not carry well. He had no dramatic talent and rarely made a public address. But he wanted to say something now to all these people whose President he had become. He wanted to assure them that he represented them all, whether they were Federalists or Republicans—that he was the American President of an American people and the people must, despite political differences, think of themselves as Americans.

And so, his voice a little higher and a little more unpleasant because of the effort to speak loud, he made his address. "I shall often be wrong through defect of judgment," he said. "When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those who positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others who may condemn what they would not if seen in all its parts."

He told them that they were all Federalists and all Republicans in that they were all devoted to the welfare of the country and thus united. And he asked the blessing of God on his administration—and with these words ended his address. It was a short speech and was received in silence at first and then with a cheer that some thought lacking in enthusiasm and some thought was subdued by a kind of awe rising from the sincerity of what had been said. Mr. Justice Marshall was deeply impressed and eyed Jefferson the more closely because there had been times when he thought him a rabble-rouser. And Vice President Aaron Burr, whose complicated character could swing from sincerity to cynicism in a matter of minutes, shook Jefferson's hand warmly.

That night Jefferson, now President of the United States, went back to dinner at Canaird's boardinghouse. The other guests were

already seated and nobody rose or moved to make room for him. A few days later an Inaugural Ball was held to honor the new President. But the greatest men in the land were absent from it. This hurt Jefferson. Yet some of the hurt was lessened by the presence of people of no importance at all, people of no property, who wandered in quite freely to shake his hand and drink a glass of punch to his health. He was pleased that they came, for he felt himself their President.

46

In his last days in office as President of the United States John Adams had given way to a kind of panic. He was appalled at the thought that soon America would be governed by a President and a Congress that believed that people of no wealth at all (and therefore no responsibility) were capable of running the country. In an agony of mind, he decided that he must protect the nation against such a catastrophe—which was called "Republicanism."

And so, after Thomas Jefferson had been elected President but before he had taken office, Adams pushed through the Congress a bill enormously increasing the number of federal judges. And then in the last hours of his own administration he appointed members of his own party—Federalists—to these positions as judges for life. What he had done, in short, was pack the federal benches with judges opposed to Jefferson's Republican principles, in the sure knowledge that when any matter came before them they would rule against a Republican interpretation of the law.

These appointments of Adams were a calculated attempt to interfere with and indeed control Jefferson's term of office. When Jefferson heard of them he was more angry than he had ever been in his life and the friendship he had once felt for Adams was now dead.

He could, however, do nothing about these appointments. He could not remove John Marshall as Chief Justice of the United

States, nor could he remove any of the federal judges Adams had appointed. They would remain in office until they died or until they were guilty of some gross offense against the Constitution which could be proved against them.

Tom Jefferson had another problem before him when he became President. All government employees, from Postmaster General to Justices of the Peace, were Federalists appointed either by Washington or by Adams. And now the Republicans who had supported Jefferson expected to be appointed to some of these positions, which carried good salaries and also a great deal of prestige. But Jefferson did not believe that anyone should be deprived of a position solely because of his political views. He did not want to discharge Federalist public servants merely to give their jobs to Republicans. But this did not satisfy Jefferson's supporters. They clamored for positions in the government and strong pressure was put on the President, especially from New York.

In New York State Aaron Burr had his greatest strength, and Burr's strength there had offset the power of the Federalist Party led by Alexander Hamilton. Burr did not have Jefferson's qualms about rewarding his supporters, and he wanted a good post in New York for Matthew L. Davis, who had been Burr's most active supporter during the election. The awarding of this post lay in Jefferson's hands, but Jefferson was by no means prepared to discharge a man to give a job to Burr's supporter.

"I hate this whole business of taking posts away from some and giving them to others," he told Madison. "I feel like a butcher." And so Burr's friend Davis went without the post he sought, and from that time there was a growing enmity and distaste between Tom Jefferson and Aaron Burr, his Vice President.

The truth of the matter was that Jefferson did not trust Burr. There was a deep difference in the personalities and characters of the two men. Both were brilliant and both were well educated, with a love of learning. But Burr loved adventure and rarely stopped to reckon the cost, while Jefferson was ruled more by his mind than by his heart. Jefferson was strong on principle and on ethics. Burr was prepared to sacrifice principles in the interest of practical politics.

Both were brave men in their own fields. Jefferson had defied

the whole aristocracy of Virginia to wrest the government of the state from the hands of the wealthy planters. Burr had joined Washington's army at twenty years of age, and fought daringly in every major campaign until 1779, when he was forced to resign because of ill health brought on by the hardships he had endured. The greatest adventure for Jefferson might be a new book of philosophy or of law or science. The greatest adventure for Burr might be a new campaign. Burr could not tolerate inaction. Jefferson disliked show and excitement. Two such men could not work well together. Every day found them further apart. Jefferson was courteous but he never consulted Burr. And Burr was resentful of Jefferson's treatment, particularly Jefferson's failure to reward Burr's supporters in New York State.

Even when it came to choosing his Cabinet, Tom Jefferson did not consult Burr. He knew very well whom he wanted for the major posts of his Cabinet, and the minor posts he would fill with men who were capable rather than politically important.

For Secretary of State he chose James Madison whom he had known and worked with for twenty-five years. For Secretary of the Treasury, the next important post in the Cabinet, Jefferson chose Albert Gallatin. Henry Dearborn became Secretary of War. He was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, having fought in every major campaign right up to the surrender of Yorktown. He had been a comrade-in-arms of Aaron Burr's, but there was no great warmth between them. When he had been Secretary of War only a little while, he gave orders for the erection of a fort on the shores of Lake Michigan which became known as Fort Dearborn and was the nucleus around which the city of Chicago grew. Henry Dearborn came from New Hampshire, and in addition to his competence as a soldier, Jefferson chose him because he was from New England. He wanted North and South represented in his Cabinet, for he was always anxious to avoid any rivalry between the two parts of the nation.

For Attorney General, Jefferson chose another New Englander, Levi Lincoln, a lawyer who was at the time only thirty-six. Gideon Granger, also from New England, and at thirty-four the youngest member of the Cabinet, was given the post of Postmaster General. That left only one position to fill—the new Cabinet post of Secretary of the Navy.

In 1801, only the New England states, which depended for much of their living on the shipping industry, thought the post of Secretary of the Navy very important. Jefferson did not visualize a great American navy, to rival that of Britain or Spain or France. He thought of a navy sufficient to protect the American seacoast —gunboats and other small war vessels. He had no experience in shipbuilding or ship management and did not want to appoint to the Navy Department a professional sea captain, for he believed that civilians should be in charge of the army and the navy. So he appointed to the post of Secretary of the Navy first Samuel Smith and then his brother, Robert, both of Baltimore, Maryland. Robert Smith, though a lawyer, had experience of both shipping and finance and proved an efficient Secretary.

Jefferson made one final appointment, which was not of Cabinet rank but was of the greatest importance to him and to the country. He chose a young professional soldier, Meriwether Lewis, as his private secretary. Lewis was twenty-seven years old at the time, and a neighbor of the President's, his home being at Charlottesville, Virginia, just a few miles from Monticello. However, Thomas Jefferson had plans for his private secretary, Meriwether Lewis, which did not involve sitting at a desk and copying out confidential correspondence day after day.

47

As a boy in his father's house at Shadwell on the Rivanna River, Thomas Jefferson had lived only a few miles from the Virginia frontier. He was familiar with Indians and trappers and pioneers who obtained title to a few acres of land and built their houses out of the trees felled to clear it. With his elder sister, Jane, now long dead, he had explored the upper reaches of the Rivanna in an Indian canoe obtained for him by his father, Colonel Peter Jefferson. He had delighted in the tumult and thunder of the water over the rapids, watched its swift blackness as it hurtled by in the deeper parts, and dreamed of the great river, the Mississippi, far

away to the west, of which the Cherokees often spoke when they camped at Shadwell on their way to Williamsburg.

Everybody knew where the Mississippi ended, far to the south in Spanish territory at New Orleans. But nobody knew where the great river had its beginning, nor all the tributaries that flowed into it, nor how far and in what direction they traveled before they joined the huge Mississippi. Nor did anyone know much about the lands that lay westward beyond the Mississippi, for these were all Spanish lands—owned by Spain, but not settled by Spain. They were huge and unexplored, open to the sky and the silence of time.

Across the vast grasslands and forests the wind mourned and whimpered undisturbed as it had for hundreds of thousands of years. It was said that in some of these areas there were hordes of American bison, as buffalo were called, so thick that they covered the ground from horizon to horizon. All moved in one direction as if the very ground itself were moving, and a man watching them became dizzy as a result of this tremendous motion.

There were hordes of wild horses too, according to the Indians and those trappers who had ventured into this forbidden Spanish territory. The horses were magnificent—beautiful and gigantic beasts, jet black, piebald, sorrel, paint, even golden horses called palominos, all descendants of animals left in the wilderness by Spanish explorers 200 years before.

This vast lonely territory, extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the snows of Canada and from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, belonged to Spain more by right of discovery than by conquest.

Spanish explorers, seeking gold rather than land, had first entered into it and claimed it for the King of Spain. But except for Mexico with its gold and silver mines, and the fertile delta of the Mississippi, Spain had done little to develop this huge empire in the New World. Thomas Jefferson believed that it should belong not to Spain but to the United States of America. He believed that, extending west, America would find enough land and raw materials of every kind to make herself self-supporting and no longer dependent on the manufactures and trade of Europe. A self-supporting America with every family capable of

earning its own living by manufacture or by farming or other useful employment was part of Jefferson's dream. It would be an America where want was unknown, where all had equal access to justice and where the only aristocracy would be the aristocracy of the mind.

He had been working on the plan for the westward expansion of America long before he became President. When he was Governor of Virginia during the Revolutionary War, he had helped George Rogers Clark get the money he needed to attack the British along the Ohio and secure the territory beyond the Cumberlands, which was to become known as Kentucky, for America. Jefferson had been pushing America west during the Revolutionary War and he determined to complete the job now that he was President.

It was with this purpose then that he had selected Lieutenant Meriwether Lewis as his private secretary. Lewis was a friend of William Clark, a younger brother of George Rogers Clark, a young man Jefferson also knew, for Jefferson liked to talk with ambitious young men. He talked often with Lewis and always about the western lands.

"Have you ever heard anyone say with certainty how far west the Missouri River extends?" he asked.

Lewis shook his head. "There's no hard news," he said. "The Indians around the forts, like Fort Massac and Fort Wilkinson, where I was stationed, tell you anything about the river they think will please you. The fur trappers aren't much better. I met one who said he had been up the Missouri what he reckoned was five hundred miles and the river was still deep and broad."

"In what direction did it head?"

"About northwest. Steady northwest for about a week's journey after leaving the Mississippi."

"A week's journey," said Jefferson. "How many miles would that be?"

Lewis shrugged. "I was talking with a trapper," he reminded the President. "It would depend on how many beaver were about. If beaver were plentiful a week's journey might not be more than thirty miles."

"You have seen the Mississippi yourself?"

"Yes, sir. Where the Ohio comes in near Kaskaskia."

"It flows through level ground, I believe?"

"Yes. As far as the eye can see, the ground is level. There are no mountains, they say, for hundreds of miles."

"So both the Mississippi and the Missouri, flowing over flat ground, move slowly?"

"Yes."

"Which would mean that it would be possible to go up the Missouri in barges, perhaps with a squaresail to help when the wind served."

"That would be the best way," said Lewis. "Keep to the river as long as it serves."

"As long as it serves," said Jefferson. "But where does it start? It must rise in some mountain range far to the west, and being on the eastern side of the mountain, flow eastward. But suppose in that same mountain range another great river rose on the other flank, flowing westward. That is certainly possible. And suppose that between the headwaters of the Missouri and this other river there is only a small extent of land to be crossed. Why, then we would be near to realizing one of the oldest dreams of man."

"What dream, sir?" asked Lewis.

"The Northwest Passage," said Jefferson. "A water route, though by rivers, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and thus to the Orient, without goods having to be transported around Cape Horn." He was excited and the excitement showed in his face. "We could sell the manufactures of New England and the produce of the southern states in Cathay and develop a fortune in trade for our country." And then he relaxed and smiled, and turning to Meriwether Lewis, he said, "Do you think I dream too much, Lieutenant?"

"Other men may dream too much, Mr. President," said Lewis. "But no one will ever complain of you dreaming."

In truth, Meriwether Lewis idolized Thomas Jefferson and tried desperately to model his own character on that of the President. He tried to spend at study the same hours as the President; tried to eliminate what he thought were defects in his character; questioned himself seriously on the part he was supposed to play in the world, and was at times enormously elated at the thought that the President had perhaps some special mission for him, and at other times depressed at the conviction that he would never amount to anything of note.

Knowing Jefferson's interest in every branch of science, Meri-

wether Lewis tried to read books on zoology and on botany and treatises on geology, though some of the terms cracked his brains. Some of the things the President talked to him about at times made Lewis wonder whether there was not some reason in the name his opponents sometimes called the President: "Mad Tom." For it was not unusual for Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, to question Meriwether Lewis on methods of sun-drying meat and fish, or discuss the technique of skinning birds so as to preserve the feathers and the shape of the creature.

Meriwether Lewis, then, studied the President's hobbies and attended to the President's confidential correspondence and wondered whether there might not perhaps be more in store for him. And the President set in motion the secret machinery which would provide Meriwether Lewis with his purpose in life and extend the territory of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

The gateway to Spain's huge empire west of the Mississippi lay through the city of New Orleans at the mouth of the river—also under the Spanish flag. American pioneers and farmers east of the Mississippi, with goods to export—corn, timber, furs—had to send their goods down the Mississippi through Spanish territory and export them from New Orleans. This was not a comfortable arrangement, for at any moment the Spanish authorities could shut down New Orleans and deprive American westerners of a port through which to export their produce.

Jefferson was determined that this huge area west of the Mississippi, and the river itself, as well as the port at its mouth, must be American. There were two ways in which this could be achieved. The United States would go to war with Spain for the territory. Or the United States could negotiate with Spain and obtain the territory by purchase.

Jefferson determined to buy the territory from Spain, and shortly after taking office he instructed his agents in Madrid to open negotiations. And the United States envoys in Madrid, after weeks of patiently putting out feelers to see whether the Spanish government would sell Louisiana, as it was called, made a horrifying discovery. Unknown to anybody, the King of Spain had sold the whole of his possessions in North America to France. Spanish control over American trade down the Mississippi was bad

enough. But French control could not be tolerated. France was altogether too powerful. France, owning the Mississippi, could impose a tyranny over the western farmers of America and completely block American expansion toward the Pacific. Plainly, every effort must be made to purchase the territory from France.

Robert B. Livingston of New York was already in Paris as United States Envoy. Livingston, indeed, had been one of the committee appointed to draw up the Declaration of Independence in 1776, but the work had unanimously been handed over to Jefferson. Jefferson believed, and so did Madison, that a special delegate should be sent to France to aid Livingston in the negotiations to buy the vast territory from France. He picked James Monroe, whom he had also known for many years and who was in fact a disciple of the President's. What Jefferson was immediately concerned about was the purchase of New Orleans at the mouth of the Mississippi, and sufficient territory on the western bank of the Mississippi to make it an American river.

If the negotiations failed to achieve this, the envoys were to try for a permanent treaty guaranteeing the navigation rights on the river. If Napoleon refused, the negotiators were to stall the French and open secret negotiations with Britain which would provide an alliance between the United States and Britain. But this was to be a last resort, for Jefferson had a deep distrust of British foreign policy.

At this time France and Britain were at peace, but it was an uneasy peace. Both sides were recouping their forces to go to war again with each other. The French Foreign Minister was Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord. He was an astute man who served his country well but saw no harm in enriching himself from his high office. When Livingston called to see him, Talleyrand said, "Have you any money?" Astonished at such bluntness, Livingston replied, "I don't understand you, sir."

"It is perfectly simple," said Talleyrand. "In this country all these matters of diplomacy are very difficult to bring to a success. But just as soon as money is amply available, all the difficulties vanish."

Livingston came of a good line of Yankee traders, but bribery was not one of his methods in trading. He closed the interview

without committing himself one way or another. But it was really Britain that unwittingly obtained not only New Orleans but the whole of Louisiana for the United States.

The tattered peace between France and Britain was falling rapidly to shreds. Talleyrand was astute enough to realize that when war broke out, as it would, the British fleet could seize New Orleans with half a broadside, and take possession of the whole territory of Louisiana as well. France couldn't hold Louisiana, and it was important that the vast area should not fall into the hands of Britain.

One day Talleyrand, meeting the British Minister, Lord Whitworth, made a gesture as if to strike him. Whitworth reached for his sword. The little byplay was Talleyrand's method of informing the British ambassador that the two nations would soon be at war. He then summoned Livingston and said, "Are you interested in buying the whole of Louisiana?"

With only $2,000,000 authorized to bargain with, Livingston said, "No, sir. Our wishes extend only to New Orleans and the territories of Florida."

"If you cut off the head, you kill the animal," said Talleyrand. "Louisiana is quite worthless to anybody unless New Orleans, which is its natural head, goes along with it. You may have to bargain for the whole territory. Find out how much you can pay."

"Twenty million francs," said Livingston.

"Too little," said Talleyrand. "The stakes are high, my friend, and the play is fast. You must bring more money than that to the table."

This occurred one day before Monroe arrived in Paris with Jefferson's secret instructions. When Monroe told Livingston of these, Livingston again went to Talleyrand, with an offer of more money, but he now found the French Foreign Minister curiously evasive. The fact was that the negotiations had been taken out of Talleyrand's hands by Napoleon and the business turned over to the French Finance Minister, the Marquis François de Barbé-Marbois. This was very good news, for it strongly indicated that Napoleon was anxious for the United States to own the Louisiana territory.

The Count de Marbois had been on the staff of the French

Legation in Philadelphia during the Revolutionary War. He had been a friend of Jefferson's. Marbois summoned both Livingston and Monroe to his quarters and told them frankly what Napoleon had said to him. If they could pay $25,000,000, Napoleon had said, they could have the whole of Louisiana, including the Mississippi and the key city of New Orleans. Livingston and Monroe were both excited and appalled by this news. They had been authorized to spend only $2,000,000 and Marbois asked for more than twelve times that amount. They asked for time to think the matter over, and returned the next day with an offer of $12,500,000.

They had had a harassing time arriving at that figure and even so were exceeding their authority. But, as Monroe pointed out, President Jefferson was exceeding his authority too, so they were in excellent company. "The two million Mr. Jefferson obtained from the Congress," said Monroe, "was for use 'in intercourse between the United States and foreign nations.' I suppose this can be called intercourse, but the Congress has been told nothing about buying territory. This calls for a treaty, I should think, and the President has no right to commit the nation to a treaty."

In any case Marbois said the money was not enough. "Do you think we should offer more?" asked Monroe. "Remember the old saying, 'In for a lamb, in for a sheep.' We are authorized to spend two million. We've offered six times that amount. Why not be bolder and offer seven or eight times?"

"You're a Virginian," said Livingston, "and I'm what they call a Yankee—a Yankee trader. So I will teach you a little lesson. Time is worth money. France and Britain are almost at war. Every day that goes by brings that war closer. The British fleet is assembling at Spithead and I've no doubt a squadron will be sent across the Atlantic. The greater the threat by the British to New Orleans, the lower the price to us."

The two then waited for two weeks, and on the last day of April of that year were summoned to see Marbois again. The French Finance Minister was ready to lower his price. He was prepared to part with New Orleans, the Mississippi, and the whole of the Louisiana territory, which would later include all or large parts of the states of Arkansas, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri,

Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Wyoming, for about $15,000,000. The price was not much more than $1.50 per square mile. It was perhaps the biggest real-estate deal in history, and when Livingston signed the treaty on May 2, he said, "From this day forward, the United States takes its place among the powers of the first rank."

When the triumphant news confirming the purchase reached Jefferson some weeks later he conferred with his confidential secretary Meriwether Lewis. And Lewis left Washington and headed for Missouri. There he changed into deerskins and with young Lieutenant William Clark and a handful of men set out up the Missouri River, looking for the Northwest Passage and surveying the vast lands that were now part of the United States.

"Note the plants and the birds and the animals," said Jefferson when they parted, for these were the things he loved.

And Lewis, at times starving and at times freezing on his journey, noted them.

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It was some months before Jefferson could move from his boardinghouse into the official President's residence which was being constructed in what was at the time the muddy village of Washington. This residence was nowhere near finished when Jefferson, the second President to occupy it, tried to set up housekeeping there. The walls of the eastern part of the house were unplastered. The big East Room could not be used, for it lacked windows. The slate roof leaked—there were not enough slates to make it tight—and it was to leak for three years before it was made weatherproof. Congress was miserly about appropriating funds for the official residence of the President, and there were no storehouses or washhouses, all of them necessary in those days, for the President's use.

The building was surrounded by a rail fence, but the grounds were a wilderness of shrubs and briers and rank grasses. Jefferson

pleaded with the Congress for a little money to make a garden here, but the Congress refused any funds. What gardening there was at the White House (which was in fact a pinkish brown at the time) was done at Jefferson's expense. Even so, when Meriwether Lewis returned, after his exploration of the Missouri, with several grizzly bears as presents for Tom Jefferson, the bears were turned loose in the White House grounds, where they were as content as in the wilderness. People who didn't like Jefferson laughed over this and said he lived in a bear garden.

There was not even a stable at the White House in which to keep horses. A temporary stable was constructed where horses could be kept for a few hours. But Jefferson would not keep his own beautiful animals there overnight and stabled them in rented premises several blocks away. When he wanted to ride on his favorite riding horse of that time, Wildair, a good hour was required for the horse to be brought around to him.

All the furniture at the White House when Jefferson took up residence was secondhand, and some of it was downright shoddy. Jefferson's furnishings were a miscellaneous collection of pieces used by Washington and Adams when the presidential residence was in Philadelphia. The furnishings for the drawing room were of crimson damask and had been used by Washington during his two administrations. All were pretty worn, but Jefferson kept them out of a deep love for Washington.

To some extent perhaps Jefferson himself could be blamed for his hodgepodge residence as President. During Washington's administrations and Adams' he had become fearful that a kind of court might develop around the President which would make him as remote from the people as any European sovereign. He was determined to stress informality. He let it be known that anyone who wanted to call on him and who had legitimate business could do so. No elaborate correspondence with a court chamberlain was needed first. He dressed almost carelessly in his desire that no one should think that he was giving himself airs. He strolled around the White House in an old brown coat, corduroy breeches, woolen hose, a red waistcoat that had seen some years of wear, and with slippers on instead of court shoes. The slippers were sometimes worn down at the heels.

When Thomas Moore, the Irish song writer, called on Jeffer-

son, he was horrified to find the President wearing an old dressing gown. And Moore, who was, alas, a bit of a prig, spread some vicious gossip about Jefferson because he was offended at being received so informally.

Jefferson's own study, which was also the room in which he conferred with his Cabinet, he furnished to suit himself. Down the center was a long table with drawers on each side. He had designed this table himself, believing that every piece of furniture should serve a number of purposes. In some of the drawers were, of course, important documents and works of reference. But in others were certain garden tools, for Thomas Jefferson, when problems began to overwhelm him, would go out into the wilderness that surrounded the White House and clear a patch of weeds or prune some of the bushes or hack away some of the undergrowth. "When my head starts to spin with too much thought," he told Madison, "I can steady it up with five minutes of gardening."

Some plants he put in pots and brought them into the Cabinet room and put them on the windows, and when things were going wrong it consoled him to see that a sprig of special ivy he had planted in the pot had taken root and was flourishing. He never liked to be far away from the world of nature.

In this huge unfinished official residence, which was thronged not only with visitors but also with plasterers, carpenters and roofers, Thomas Jefferson lived quite alone. His two daughters were now married, but their husbands were not well-to-do and could not afford to come to Washington.

As President, Jefferson could have provided fine posts, well paid, in the government for both his sons-in-law, but his principles would not allow him to do this. He would not even find a post for his boyhood friend John Page, whose affairs had gone from bad to worse and who at times was not far from hunger.

To be sure, Jefferson sent Page what private funds he could. But it was a great relief to him when Page, through his own efforts, was elected Governor of Virginia. As for his sons-in-law, John W. Eppes and Thomas Mann Randolph, he could of course help them privately by housing them at Monticello as often as they would come. They were not in strained circumstances but they had not managed to make their mark in the world yet.

However, both became candidates for congressional seats and both were elected, though in Randolph's case the vote was so close that there was talk of a recount. Jefferson refused to help either to gain office, but he was delighted at their election, mostly because it meant that his daughters would be coming to Washington and he would be able to see them.

Shortly after taking office, he suffered severe stomach trouble. He had eaten a dish of fish and decided that his system could not tolerate this food. So he gave up all seafood except oysters and crabs. He liked these delicacies and when he suffered a slight unease after eating them he went for a long ride—which he liked doing—and announced that that was the best cure.

Quite often he had no one of his own circle to tend to his domestic affairs, but only servants, some of whom were in fact slaves brought from Monticello. When he had a formal dinner Dolley Madison, wife of James, was hostess for him. She was a great treasure. She loved to cook and loved to entertain and had a pleasant personality, wholesome and fresh, which soothed all the prickles of Jefferson's anxious guests. But she failed to soothe the prickles of Anthony Merry, the British ambassador, who did not like the informality of the dinners at the White House. It was Jefferson's custom to bring all his guests together in the drawing room, to talk to them all as equals, and when dinner was served each gentleman led whatever lady he was talking to at the time into the dining room, without any precedence or rank.

Everybody sat wherever he wished, and this annoyed the British ambassador, who felt that, as he represented Great Britain, he should always have the place of honor. Thereafter the ambassador excused himself from Jefferson's informal dinners and complained privately that the food was not of the best. But this was not a fair criticism, for Jefferson liked to set a good table and, after his many years in France, served the best wine.

He drank very little himself, but every year 500 large bottles of the best champagne were consumed at the White House. Jefferson, always conscientious about spending public money, paid for much of the wine himself, though it was served to official guests.

On financial matters his confidant was his Secretary of Finance, Gallatin. Jefferson hated debt, and so did Gallatin. Between them,

the two men devised a method of paying off the national debt in ten years. "Debt and revolution are as inseparable as cause and effect," Jefferson told Gallatin. "If public spending on borrowed money goes unchecked, it will destroy our whole society. If the public debt is greatly increased, we will be committed to the English career of debt, corruption and rottenness, closing with revolution." Jefferson, though he spoke harshly of England in connection with debt and taxes, had little firsthand experience of England. But England had been the enemy, and England he tended to distrust and denounce.

Jefferson laid it down as a rule that the government must not borrow large sums of money from bankers or private individuals. To do so, he held, was to surrender the government to its creditors. "He who borrows money borrows chains," he said. But the country had to have money, and a revenue had then to be raised by taxes. He inaugurated a principle for taxation which was to last into the present century. Taxes were to be levied on those who could afford to pay them—the system which in the twentieth century became known as soak-the-rich.

Together, Jefferson and Gallatin devised a simple four-point financial program for the United States. There was to be no more borrowing. The national debt was to be paid off systematically. Expenditures were to be reduced. The burden of taxation was to fall more heavily on the rich than on the poor.

One of the first taxes Jefferson abolished was that on whiskey, which had led to a revolt or the threat of a revolt among the western frontiersmen in Washington's administration. Jefferson substituted a tax on wine. Whiskey, he knew, was the relaxation of the poor man who couldn't afford wine and often distilled his own spirits. This change in taxes made Jefferson the toast of every frontier gathering and a target for scorn at every fashionable dinner party.

To achieve other economies, Jefferson cut the size of the standing army from 4,000 to 2,500 men. The army was tiny anyway, and the troops were needed only on the frontier along the Mississippi. He also kept a tight rein over naval expenditures, to the horror of New Englanders, who wanted to know who was going to protect American merchantmen.

They had good reason for wanting to know, for, with an

energy that astonished the world, the merchant adventurers of New England, like Crowninshield of Salem, had, right after the Revolution, started to send their ships on voyages as far away as China. The Tripoli pirates hesitated to attack a British merchantman, but caused trouble for the Americans, who were reluctant to pay the tribute demanded. This was the wrong time, then, to talk about cutting down the navy. But Jefferson begged Robert Smith, his Secretary of the Navy, to lop $170,000 off his budget.

Jefferson, however, was soon to discover that cutting the national armament was a false economy. While he was trying to get Smith to cut the navy's budget, news came that the thirty-eight-gun frigate *Philadelphia*, on duty in the Mediterranean, had been seized at Tripoli. The captain and his crew of 300 were set to hard labor by the Sultan.

Jefferson was outraged. In the face of tyranny, Thomas Jefferson could change on the moment from a man of thought to a man of wrath. He summoned his Cabinet and to the surprise of Gallatin and Madison and especially of Robert Smith, the Navy Secretary, spoke of the construction of a war fleet to send to the Mediterranean with the express purpose of burning Tripoli to the ground—and without mercy.

"We must put an end to the petty Barbary pirates," Jefferson cried. "We must have a navy adequate for the protection of our citizens everywhere in the world." This was a change of heart indeed.

Jefferson, having secured the agreement of the Cabinet, asked Congress immediately to vote more funds for warships, and he was ashamed when he learned that Livingston, in Paris, had made representations to the French court to ask them to use their influence to obtain the release of the captured seamen of the *Philadelphia*.

He was almost afraid that the French would secure the release of the captives before he could do so himself.

"We must burn Tripoli about the Sultan's ears," he told Navy Secretary Smith. And he sent Commodore Preble with a force headed by the frigate *Constitution* to the rescue of the *Philadelphia's* crew.

Preble sailed into Tripoli harbor, backed his mainyards, opened fire, and kept up so hot a rain of cannon-shot on Tripoli that the

town was reduced in the weeks that followed to rubble. After many months the Sultan of Tripoli sued for peace, and the imprisoned Americans were released. The Barbary Coast was made safe for American shipping, and the prestige of the United States rose throughout Europe.

Americans and indeed the world had seen a strange side of Thomas Jefferson—a peace-loving philosopher suddenly turned to a fire-breathing warrior smashing the power of Barbary pirates to whom the whole of Europe paid tribute.

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THE purchase of the Louisiana territory increased the national debt of the country by $13,000,000, plus interest, for the money had to be borrowed from foreign bankers. Jefferson was in a hurry to get the bargain approved by the Senate and without any great difficulty the Senate gave its assent.

By this time, however, Spain had objected to the acquisition of Louisiana and New Orleans by the United States. The Spanish maintained that when they ceded the territory to Napoleon's France there was a clause in the sale that forbade resale to any other nation. And Napoleon, at war with Britain now, didn't want a hostile Spain at his back. So there were rumors that New Orleans would not be surrendered to American authorities.

Jefferson rushed 500 regulars down the Mississippi under General James Wilkinson to take possession of New Orleans, and they were instructed to fight for the city, if need be. No fight was necessary, and New Orleans passed peacefully into American hands.

Meriwether Lewis had been sent up the Missouri, and now Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike was instructed to explore the Mississippi to its headwaters and find the source. Pike and Lewis were both to look for sites for forts, take down any foreign flags they found flying, conclude treaties with the Indians, explaining to them that they were now wards of the Great White Father in

Washington. And they must also not forget to bring back as complete a report as they could of the plant and animal life they encountered.

Meanwhile, with the aid of Gallatin, and despite the huge purchase, many economies were effected in the running of the government by Jefferson. But Jefferson had no shrewd Swiss to help him with his personal finances. His love of his home, Monticello, was such that he could not resist spending money to add to it and improve it. He also spent large sums of money entertaining guests, buying books, buying furniture, buying scientific equipment, buying seed—in fact, buying anything he was deeply interested in.

Sometimes when his two daughters Patsy and Polly were home at Monticello, he discussed his finances with them and vowed the most rigid economies. "Everything must be put on a paying basis," he would say. "I have a hundred and seventy mouths to feed and ten thousand acres out of which to feed them. Now I certainly should be up to the task. But for the time being we must economize."

Economize they would for a day or two, and then Jefferson would buy four matched horses for his coach or find himself entertaining half a dozen guests at dinner. When people called on him at Monticello, they came not for a day but for a week or fortnight, and there wasn't anything a gentleman could do about hurrying them off. And so the vows of economy evaporated.

It was a good year for Tom Jefferson when his private expenses exceeded his income by only $1,500. Some years, when crops were bad or prices poor, his income, including his salary as President, fell $3,000 to $4,000 below his expenses. There was nothing to do but to borrow money, sometimes against crops, but, as time went on, more and more frequently with his land and his beloved Monticello as security for the loan.

To cut his expenditure on hardware, Jefferson had established a nailery in which nails were made and sold. He trained some of his slaves in the work, so that they learned a trade and were on the road to individual freedom and self-support. But when the war between Britain and France waged hotter, it became difficult and then impossible to get from England the iron out of which to make nails. The nailery failed.

To end slavery was one of Jefferson's concerns. He could hit on no plan for achieving this nationally, for the freed slaves would find no employment and would starve. The greater part of them were field workers and had no skill. Jefferson talked with his sons-in-law, with Gallatin, with Madison, with Monroe, indeed with everyone whom he trusted, about the problem of slavery, searching for a solution. He proposed a plan whereby freed slaves and Germans should be integrated in villages, isolated from the rest of the community and with sufficient land to support themselves. He thought of these places as cells of freedom and independence populated by people who would grow to the stature of full and intelligent citizens. He chose Germans to integrate with the Negro slaves because they also provided a problem. Thousands of them had remained in America after the Revolutionary War. They didn't speak English, people didn't like them, and there was little employment for them. So the problem of the former German mercenary was not far removed from the problem of the liberated slave. It was the problem of being accepted into the body of American society. But none of these colonies, with industrious Germans teaching trades to the Negroes and the Negroes teaching English to the Germans, ever came into being. All Jefferson was able to do was teach a trade to some of his own slaves with which they could earn a living, and then set them free—and keep an eye on them.

One slave he brought to Washington and apprenticed to a tinsmith, whom he paid to teach the Negro his trade. Once a week during the three years of this apprenticeship, the slave came to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, to show him the work he had done. And Jefferson, whatever troubles of state pressed on his mind, gave all his attention for half an hour to the struggles of a Negro to acquire a trade. Eventually the man was skilled enough to turn out a candlestick. He brought this to Jefferson.

"I made it myself," he said with pride. "I made three but was not satisfied and this one is the best."

Jefferson admired the candlestick. It was an excellent piece of work, worthy of an artisan. He told the man so and said he would like to have it for himself.

"Why, Master Tom," said the slave, "it's yours, of course."

"But I must pay you," said Jefferson, reaching for his purse.

"Pay me!" cried the man. "But, Master Tom, you *own* me and everything I have, and you don't have to pay for what you own."

"No, no," cried Jefferson. "You don't understand. You are becoming a tinsmith, not to give me your work, but so you can be free and sell your work."

"I can't sell anything to you, Master Tom," the man said. "I can't sell anything to you and hold up my head. Everything we have, you gave us." And Jefferson was unable to do what he most wished to do—buy something from one of his slaves, and with that act show the man that he was free.

But he was able to set this slave up as a tinsmith, having given him his freedom.

During his first term as President, Jefferson contrived to spend the summer from July to October at Monticello. These were the fever months in big cities—the time when smallpox flared up, when malaria was rife, and yellow fever too. He tried to get his sons-in-law and his grandchildren and his daughters to Monticello each summer, and the letters he wrote to them begging them to come contained more urgency and more anxiety than any he wrote on the affairs of state.

"I need only you and Mr. Eppes [her husband] here to make me completely happy," he wrote to Polly and then, because her health was never good and she had not thoroughly recovered from the birth of her child, he added, "I hope when you come here you will make very short stages, drive slowly and safely, which may well be done if you do not permit yourself to be hurried." And after this sage advice his prudence broke down completely and the very next sentence was, "Surely the sooner you come the better."

Sometimes he wondered whether his daughters and their husbands were not taking too seriously his own bursts of economy. Then he had to write them to say that there was plenty of food at Monticello and they were to use it up as if it were their own. He said he would be very uneasy if they didn't do this, and the household servants would do whatever they wanted. If they ran short of anything, they were to order it from any of the stores with which he had an account. The fact was that Thomas

Jefferson's real life began at Monticello when he was surrounded by his family.

He had a younger sister who had married a Mr. Marks, who lived in lower Virginia. Mr. Marks was not a wealthy man and Jefferson for thirty years made it a point to have him and his wife—Jefferson's sister—spend the sickly season at Monticello. When her husband died, Jefferson brought his sister to his own home and made a provision in his will that she was to be taken care of and her every comfort attended to to her dying day.

Old friends meant a great deal to Thomas Jefferson. One of these had fallen on hard times and become a kind of villain in the eyes of America. He was Tom Paine, whose pamphlet *Common Sense* had stiffened the faltering courage of the nation in the earliest days of the Revolution and had indeed made Jefferson and other members of the Continental Congress see clearly that a break with Britain and King George III was inevitable. Paine had left after the Revolution and gone to France to further the spread of liberty there. He was an unprepossessing man with a whining kind of voice and a wasted physique. He was also given to bouts of heavy drinking and heavier repentance. Washington, while acknowledging Paine's genius, had confessed that he could scarcely bear to be in the same room as the corsetmaker from Bristol who had helped shake the throne of a King. In France, Paine was elected to the French parliament and unfortunately became involved with those terrorists who massacred, without trial, the aristocrats of France.

Ugly stories about Paine, most of them gossip, came back to America. He had deserted his country, it was said. He had turned his back on God and was an atheist. Then came the time when Paine lost his popularity in France and lived there almost starving. Nobody would have anything to do with him. Jefferson, remembering how clearly Paine had spoken up for freedom when better men quaked in their shoes, proposed to send a frigate to bring Paine back to the United States as one of the most glorious sons of freedom. It was pointed out that this would not sit well with others, but Jefferson saw to it that Paine was returned, despite his poverty, to the United States. And when he arrived, though others avoided him, Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States and gentleman of Virginia, sought him out.

"Mr. Paine, sir," he cried, when they met, "I am delighted to see you back in the country whose freedom you were one of the foremost in achieving." And he took and shook the trembling hand of the man who was now called an atheist, a traitor and a drunkard. And then he walked arm and arm with him through the streets for everyone to see. Whatever Paine's faults, Tom Jefferson loved him for his devotion to liberty, and would not turn his back on him.

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MATTERS were almost as peaceable in Jefferson's official family—his Cabinet—as they were in his home in Monticello. The meetings were conducted like a discussion among friends, without loss of temper on anybody's part. Members of the Cabinet liked each other and were in political agreement.

The exception was the Vice President, Aaron Burr. Burr was not even invited to the Cabinet meetings, nor consulted about matters of internal or external policy. If Jefferson should die, Burr would take over the Presidency. And yet such was the distrust that Jefferson had for Burr that he told his Vice President only whatever was essential. There was no confidence or cooperation between the two.

At the end of a year, Burr saw that he was to have only the minimum share in the Republican administration. Since he had actually been tied with Jefferson in the voting for President, this situation was hard to bear. As Jefferson's first term drew to a close, Burr began to see that he could not look for any aid from the President in his future political career. Certainly he would never be Jefferson's Vice President again. The Governorship of New York, held by Republican Dewitt Clinton, was about to fall vacant. Clinton would not run again, and Burr entered his name as a candidate.

Clinton and Burr had once been political partners. But the danger of Burr's character—the same danger and recklessness

which Jefferson distrusted—had made itself evident to Clinton. Clinton, rather than supporting Burr to succeed him, supported another Republican, Morgan Lewis. And Hamilton also threw his weight behind Lewis, so that in New York in the contest for Governor the oddly unpopular Burr was up against a combination of Republicans and Federalists.

This was the kind of lone fight, however, that Burr reveled in. His wife being dead, Burr concentrated all his affections, and they were deep, on his brilliant daughter Theodosia. The letters he wrote to Theodosia were always lighthearted, even when they dealt with the most critical matters. "They are very busy here," he wrote her, "about an election between Morgan Lewis and A. Burr [himself]." And he reported that there were some new and amusing libels about him. He prophesied that he would carry New York City by a small majority if the election day was fair. The election day *was* fair, and he did carry New York City by a very small majority. But he lost the state; the combination of Republicans and Federalists was too much.

He had put up a tremendous fight and indeed had won some of the more moderate members of Hamilton's party to his side. It began to be clear that there was scarcely room on the political scene for three such men as Jefferson, Hamilton and Burr. Hamilton had retired from open politics to become a lawyer. Burr, not in the least downcast about the New York election result, although he had spent heavily on his campaign and was nearly beggared by it, looked confidently to an equally brilliant future at the bar. He had taken his degree in law and law was his first love. He decided that when his term as Vice President was over he would establish a legal practice in New York. That would leave the political field to Jefferson.

Unfortunately, the excesses of the campaign for Governor of New York had not died down when the last vote was counted. Hamilton, in addressing a meeting of influential New Yorkers during the campaign, had said that Burr was a dangerous man who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government. There was nothing extraordinary about that statement in a day when political campaigns were hotly waged. But according to one report which got into the newspapers, Hamilton was said to have stated that he had a "despicable opinion" of Burr. The phrase

suggested that Hamilton knew or pretended to know of something highly dishonorable in Burr's private life. Burr felt that his political life was fair game for criticism, but his private character was not to be besmirched by anyone. When the election was over and the story of Hamilton's "despicable opinion" of Burr was everybody's property and widely reported in the press, Burr wrote to Hamilton asking for an explanation.

Burr's letter was calm and moderate in tone. He wanted to know whether Hamilton had indeed told others that he despised him. If not, he should deny having said this. If true, he must apologize or Burr must seek satisfaction in a duel.

Dueling was an old European method of settling a question of honor and had a curious justification. It was held in ancient times that God would not permit an innocent man to be killed in a fight to establish the truth. Dueling came to America when the nation was settled, and it was to remain a feature of American life long after it was outlawed in Europe. In its final American form it became the western gunfight or showdown. Many eminent Americans in Jefferson's time and later engaged in duels. Among them were General Horatio Gates, Governor Dewitt Clinton and Lieutenant Stephen Decatur. There was nothing dishonorable about dueling, then. Rather it was held dishonorable for a man, publicly insulted, not to challenge his offender. Hamilton could have avoided a contest with Burr. But unfortunately he was too proud to do so, and instead of replying directly to Burr's letter he quibbled. And when he finally was prepared to satisfy Burr he had added further insult to Burr's grievances, and so the duel was arranged.

Jefferson knew nothing of it. He seldom read the public press, hated gossip and discouraged people from giving him gossip. In any case dueling, though practiced, was frowned upon, and duels were kept secret. The duel was arranged with pistols at Weehawken, New Jersey for the morning of July 11, 1804.

Hamilton in a letter to a friend said that he would not be the first to fire and indeed would waste his first shot. But when he approached the dueling ground his face was pale, for at the same spot, not long before, his twenty-year-old son had been killed in a duel over a matter so trivial it is not remembered today.

The two faced each other at the regulation ten paces—thirty

feet apart. Hamilton refused a hair-trigger pistol, which was faster at firing, and having won the toss for choice of position, elected the least favorable spot so that he faced the sun and the flashing of its light upon the Hudson River.

The two men, standing thus, face to face, were asked whether they were ready, and they replied calmly that they were. They were then given permission to fire. Burr raised his pistol, took aim and fired, and there were two shots heard rather than one. Hamilton tottered and fell and his ball rustled among the branches of a tree to the side of Burr. Burr saw Hamilton falling and ran toward him with an expression of horror on his face. Burr's second seized him and moved him away, lest he be recognized.

The wound was fatal. The ball had entered Hamilton's chest on the right-hand side, piercing the lungs. Thirty-one hours later, the brilliant Alexander Hamilton, founder of the nation's financial system, was dead. With him died the Federalist Party, and also, in some measure, Aaron Burr. The killing of a man as great as Hamilton in a duel finished forever all Burr's hopes of a future either in politics or in law. But Burr did not understand this and was surprised when the popular reaction was such that he was branded a murderer and warrants for his arrest were issued by both New Jersey and New York.

Congress was at this time in recess. Burr, Vice President of the United States, with warrants charging murder hanging over his head and a mob of Hamilton's supporters vowing vengeance, was forced to flee by night from his home in New York and spent all night in a boat before landing in New Jersey, where he was received at Port Amboy by Commodore Truxton. From there he fled to Pennsylvania and stayed at a tavern under an assumed name. He reached Philadelphia and walked about openly in the streets but then received news that the Governor of New York was going to demand his surrender.

He offered to surrender himself and face the charges against him if he could be guaranteed bail. But no such guarantee was forthcoming, and so he fled once more and went to Georgia. Here, among the southern planters to whom honor was a matter of great importance and dueling the mark of a gentleman, Burr found himself safe at last.

After his first concern that his bullet had killed Hamilton, Burr suffered no remorse at all over the duel. He was not a good shot with a pistol, and though he had taken careful aim, only the steadiness of his nerve, rather than his skill, had enabled him to hit Hamilton, who, he was quite sure, was determined to shoot him. He refused to regard himself as the prime cause of Hamilton's death. "General Hamilton brought his death on himself," he told friends. "I asked him for a reasonable explanation of his unwarranted remarks which were made public about me and he refused it. He could not expect to destroy my honor publicly and remain unchastised."

Meanwhile, though a fugitive from New York and New Jersey, he continued to write to his daughter Theodosia, now twenty-one years of age. His letters still had their old touch of gaiety. Concerning the reports in the newspapers of attempts to assassinate him (and there were many plots to kill him) he wrote to his daughter, "Those who wish me dead prefer to keep at a very respectful distance." His daughter was in South Carolina with her husband, who was Governor of that state. From Georgia, where he lived on an island off the coast, Burr went to South Carolina to join his daughter, and arrived there almost black with sunburn, having traveled 400 miles in an open canoe. By now some of the furor against him was beginning to die down.

The death of Hamilton aroused responsible opinion against dueling, and stricter laws were called for. But people began to see that there was something to be said on Burr's side. His fault was not that he had dueled but that his opponent had been Hamilton. While the writs for his arrest on a charge of murder were still about, the Congress reopened in Washington, and Burr presented himself quietly to preside over the Senate. The Senate had critical business to conduct—the trial of Mr. Justice Chase of the Supreme Court, who had been impeached on a charge of grossly abusing his authority in trials conducted under the Alien and Sedition Acts of Adams' administration. The Senators were to judge Mr. Chase, and the Vice President (wanted himself on a charge of murder) was to preside over that trial. Burr presided at the trial with the greatest dignity and fairness. When he found some of the Senators strolling around, drinking whiskey and

eating cake instead of listening to the evidence, he ordered them to their places. He needed friends desperately, particularly among the Senators, yet he would not let his personal needs interfere with the fairness of the proceedings.

The trial ended with the acquittal of Mr. Chase. By the time the trial concluded, Burr, by his impartiality and his refusal to be either intimidated or flattered, had won the respect of the whole Senate. The next day he took formal leave of the Senate, for he would now be out of office. And the Senate passed a unanimous resolution thanking him for the impartiality, dignity and ability with which he had presided over their deliberations.

Burr then left political life. His place as Vice President was taken by George Clinton of the Clinton clan which had helped to defeat him in the election for Governor of New York. His home in New York had been sold while he was a fugitive, to satisfy his creditors. He was wanted for murder in New Jersey and in New York. He owed $8,000 and was without employment and without prospects.

His future in the eastern part of the United States was utterly ruined. That being the case, daring, brilliant Aaron Burr turned his eyes to Jefferson's West—the land across the Mississippi. There might be something there for a man such as he.

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THE news of Burr's duel with Hamilton came to Jefferson at a time when he was himself plunged into grief. His daughter Polly had died after childbirth. And the baby girl to whom she gave birth died also. Her baby was born in February 1804, but what was then known as childbed fever set in, and Jefferson wrote her from Washington with all the medical advice he could offer. It was as good as anything available at the time, when the role of bacteria in sickness was unknown, and yet it was all quite useless. She should eat light foods, he said, and drink "cordial" wines (that is, wines thought to strengthen the heart). Among these, he

especially recommended sherry, and begged her to use the old Pedro Ximenes sherry at Monticello, which he assured her was genuine.

He wrote this letter in the middle of March 1804 and in April hurried to Monticello. He arrived barely in time, for Polly died on April 17, a little after eight in the morning.

The death was a crushing blow to Jefferson. He had had many children, and now only one remained, and in his anguish he wrote to his old friend John Page, now Governor of Virginia exclaiming, "Others may lose of their abundance but I, of my want, have lost even the half of all I had." He dreaded the thought that in his old age he would be alone, that Patsy too might die. But then he added that he had the consolation of the traveler: that every step through life brought him nearer to his own death and to reunion with those who had died before him.

Polly's death brought an unexpected letter from Mrs. John Adams. Mrs. Adams sought to comfort him. It was a generous gesture, but the breach between Jefferson and Adams was too wide to be healed then.

Jefferson's first term as President came to a close in private grief and public glory. Without firing a shot he had doubled the size of the United States and ensured its expansion to the Pacific Ocean. Jefferson had added more territory to his nation by negotiation than Napoleon was to win for France with all his armies. Those who had seen in the election of Jefferson the ruination of the country through government by men of no property were astonished, after four years of Jefferson, to find the United States stronger and more prosperous than ever. Federalism, which meant government in the interests of men of property, was dead. Republicanism swept the land.

Jefferson did not want a second term. He had refused to campaign for his first term and told a scandalized Madison and a horrified Gallatin that he wanted only to retire to Monticello. He was over sixty years of age. He had spent almost the whole of his adult life in public service. His estates at Monticello and Poplar Forest were losing money. His debts were huge and mounting each month, and with the loss of his daughter there was every private reason for his retirement.

But it was not just Madison and Gallatin and Monroe who

demanded that Jefferson be a candidate for a second term. The whole country wanted it.

Madison spoke for the nation when he said, "Mr. Jefferson, sir, you talk about a successor, but where do we find a successor to you? You are the only person qualified to succeed yourself. You must be a candidate."

As matters stood, there was not really any hope of Jefferson's avoiding a second term. Still, he would not seek a single vote. He would not address a meeting of friends on political matters, let alone a meeting of voters. During the election campaign, he entertained as a house guest at Monticello the outstanding naturalist of the day, Baron Alexander von Humboldt—at the time a man in his mid-thirties and already world-famous. They talked of Humboldt's explorations in South America; the meteor showers of the fall months, which Humboldt theorized had something to do with the earth's journey through space; and the prospect of introducing the olive tree into the United States. Politics were mentioned only once, when the President came down for breakfast with a copy of a newspaper which contained a venomous attack on him.

"My dear Baron," he said, handing his guest the newspaper, "you must read this and then deposit this newspaper in some museum in Europe. There it will serve as a lesson on how little real harm results from complete freedom of the press. For notwithstanding innumerable attacks of this kind, my government has never been more popular." The studious baron did indeed deposit the newspaper in a museum—from which it has long since disappeared.

In the election of 1804 Jefferson was swept into office by a majority that was not to be equaled until the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to a second term over one hundred years later. He took every state except Connecticut and Delaware, and he lost Connecticut by a very narrow margin.

Thomas Jefferson was sixty-two years old when he took office for the second time as President of the United States in March 1805. All America expected another magnificent four years, with expansion into the newly acquired territories west of the Mississippi. But the war clouds over Europe were thickening and trouble lay ahead.

52

PRESIDENT JEFFERSON was determined that the United States would stay out of the war between France and Britain which had just broken out once more. Madison was anxious about the war and its effect on American trade. But Jefferson said, "Let the lions and tigers tear each other apart. We smaller creatures will be the safer and we have no part in the quarrel." Yet he was concerned and he had good reason for his fears. The United States had a huge unguarded seacoast and Britain had for almost two centuries been sovereign of the seas.

Britain, being an island, had to maintain a huge navy for her own security. That huge navy demanded a huge body of seamen. Under British law, any Englishman who earned his living on or near the water was compelled to serve in the Royal Navy in time of war. Many Englishmen had migrated to America and many were serving on American merchantmen and in the small United States Navy. Desperate for men to man her ships, Britain took to searching American merchantmen for British subjects. Sometimes American citizens were seized by English captains who maintained that Americans were Englishmen anyway. And on one occasion the British frigate *Leopard* ordered the United States frigate *Chesapeake* to heave to, fired three shots into her, boarded her and took off several seamen, asserting they were Englishmen.

No other power in the world would have permitted such an action without declaring war on Britain. But the infant United States had very few frigates, no first-class ships of the line, and could not fight a naval war with Great Britain. To do so would be to risk the independence of the country, for many in Britain still looked for the reconquest of what was thought of as the American colonies.

The whole country, hearing of the boarding of the *Chesapeake* by the men of the *Leopard*, was hot for war with Britain.

On top of the *Chesapeake* incident came war regulations in

Europe which, in effect, gave both the British and the French the right to seize American ships. Napoleon, who referred to the American flag as "a piece of striped bunting," announced that his navy would capture any ship that allowed itself to be searched by a British warship. Britain was blockading Europe, so any American merchantman sailing with goods for any part of Europe was likely to be boarded by the British. If the British did not seize the vessel, then the French would.

Jefferson retaliated by ordering all French and British shipping out of American waters. This bold move brought him praise even from his bitterest enemies. When he heard how even the staunchest of the Federalists were praising him, Jefferson quietly said to Madison, quoting from the Psalms, "Lord, what have I done that the wicked should praise me?"

It was one thing to order the British out of American waters. It was another to make them go. Jefferson believed that American harbors could be made safe if enough gunboats were built. These were really floating barges mounting two cannon, but Jefferson believed in them passionately. They had no masts and therefore could not be moved by their own power. They were readily capsized in foul weather, and how ten or twelve gunboats were to deal with a British frigate which could unleash twenty-five guns in one broadside, and sail about at the same time, Jefferson never explained. On the subject of his gunboats he was quite unreasonable. He explained to his Cabinet and to visiting Senators and Congressmen that a gunboat was a defensive weapon. A fleet of gunboats (and he wanted about 200 of them) posed no threat to any country, for such a fleet could defend but not attack. Therefore, this was the kind of armament, he insisted, that America should build. But nobody was convinced, and those associated with the navy became bitter over Jefferson's gunboat fleet.

Britain could readily have invaded any American harbor, whether protected by gunboats or not. But Britain's hands were full—starving Napoleon's huge army by means of a European blockade—and Britain had no designs on her former colonies.

American trade, however, suffered heavily from the seizure of American cargoes and vessels. Americans were reluctant to man their own merchantmen lest they be seized at sea and forced to

serve in the British Navy. According to one estimate, 30 per cent of the men aboard Nelson's flagship, the *Victory*, at Trafalgar were Americans. Jefferson therefore decided to use a weapon that had been very effective in the early days of the struggle against England. This weapon was the embargo.

Jefferson believed that Britain's trade with the United States was so important to the British economy that if it ceased, Britain's military position would be undermined. As a first step, he asked the Congress to pass an act forbidding the importation of British goods into the United States. The act was passed, and by a good majority, for the Congress was heavily of the President's party. But the effect of the embargo was disastrous to the United States and barely affected Britain initially.

The New England states suffered most severely. Ports were idle and ships laid up. And Jefferson's Embargo Act was extended, moreover, to prohibit not only the importation of British goods but also the export of goods from the United States to Britain or any European country. Cotton, tobacco and wheat, normally exported freely, moldered in warehouses. In the first year of the embargo, exports from the United States dropped from $110,000,000 to $20,000,000, and in New York alone there were over one hundred bankruptcies in the first six months of Jefferson's Embargo Act. Gallatin and Madison had supported Jefferson in framing this act and pushing for its passage. Indeed, there was nothing else the President could do, for the weakness of the country by land and sea made it impossible to assert America's rights in any other way. But Gallatin was not enthusiastic about the President's "peaceful weapon."

"Mr. Jefferson," he said, "if this embargo is to continue so long as to be regarded as permanent, I would sooner that we went to war, ruinous as that might be. I assure you that an embargo can ruin a country as thoroughly as war itself."

Jefferson, however, was determined that the embargo must remain, though it might ruin many Americans. In his own home state, Virginia, losses were heavy. Hardly had news of the embargo become known than tobacco prices tumbled by 40 per cent, and the price of flour by 50 per cent.

The pinch as time went by was felt in England too, and an envoy was sent to open discussions concerning the attack by the

frigate *Leopard* on the *Chesapeake*, which had triggered the whole situation. But the British envoy announced that he was empowered to discuss the frigate incident only and not the whole question of the seizing of American ships and seamen. Furthermore, he announced loftily, he would not even talk about the frigates until President Jefferson had lifted the embargo. Such terms were not merely unacceptable, they were insulting to the dignity of the President of the United States; and Madison rejected them curtly on Jefferson's behalf.

Unfortunately, many who were suffering financial loss from the embargo decided that their private fortunes were more important than their country's honor and the safety of American ships at sea. Some of Jefferson's own party, led by John Randolph of Roanoke (a distant relative of the President's), united with what was left of the Federalists to present a strong opposition to the Embargo Act. Senator Thomas Pickering of Massachusetts privately got in touch with the British envoy, George Rose, and assured him that not all Americans felt as Jefferson did. And so the British were encouraged to believe that America, divided on the question of seizure of her seamen and merchantmen, would soon negotiate on acceptable terms.

Out of the Embargo Act came great loss of trade to the United States, a revival of political opposition to Jefferson by a union of Republicans and Federalists, and a tremendous increase in smuggling. There were gains from the Embargo Act, however. Though the act hurt the United States cruelly, it also in time hurt both France and Britain. Perhaps for the first time the world was introduced to a weapon which, though imperfect, could be used as a substitute for war. Jefferson might claim to be among the first to try economic warfare as a substitute for cannon-shot in establishing a country's rights. That the weapon did not work was not his fault. It worked later in many parts of the world when diligently used. Also, the fact that many goods could no longer be obtained from Britain promoted the establishment of American factories.

"America possesses within itself all the means of extensive manufacturing," Jefferson said. "All that is necessary to ensure their success is proper encouragement from the government."

Madison remarked privately to Gallatin, after hearing this, that

Thomas Jefferson was learning fast. "No school of government is as harsh or as thorough as that of the office of President of the United States," he said. "When Mr. Jefferson talks of government aid for manufacturers," he added with a smile, "I hear an echo from the grave of Hamilton."

It was true. What Jefferson was proposing, though privately, was what Hamilton had himself proposed, during Washington's first term, in a report on manufacturing. What Hamilton had known by instinct, because of his talent for economics—namely, that governments must at times help to promote industrial growth—Jefferson was learning by experience. And yet Jefferson never could bring himself to ask the Congress for bills which would favor industrial capital. He loved freedom, and feared that government might become the junior partner of industry, or industry the junior partner of government. Both entities should be independent, or as independent as possible, he maintained.

Freedom—the right to conduct business affairs, private affairs, the affairs of man and the affairs of God—without hold or legislation beyond what was absolutely necessary, was indeed the lifeblood of his being. He once wrote to his friend Dr. Benjamin Rush, the most eminent physician in America in his day: "I have sworn on the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." Those words are now engraved on his monument in Washington, D.C. They summarize his creed.

53

WHEN in the first days of March 1805, Aaron Burr, then forty-nine, ceased to be Vice President of the United States, he had nowhere to go and no future ahead of him. Before leaving office, Burr had an almost pathetic meeting with President Jefferson in which he asked for help—some public gesture of approval or friendship which would at least assure people that Jefferson was

not Burr's enemy. But Jefferson would not say or do anything to pretend a friendship that he did not feel.

Perhaps Jefferson made an error of judgment that none of his friends were in a position to warn him against. The error was to leave a man of Burr's energy, daring optimism and imagination utterly destitute, with no future ahead. Such a man was not likely to sink broken into obscurity. Burr was a fighter and a fighter of courage and daring. With his future gone in the East, Burr turned his thoughts to the West, to the land of Jefferson's recently purchased Louisiana. Might there not be a brilliant career for a man such as he in that vast territory?

At one time, while Burr was Vice President, it was reported that he had approached the British ambassador, Anthony Merry, with a scandalous proposal. It was, according to Merry, that Burr would support the British in an attempt to wrest the western territories beyond the Mississippi from control of the United States, and make a separate nation out of them. Such a proposal, if made, was treason. But there was only Merry's word for the charge, and Merry was a spiteful little man, pompous and dim-witted, who had never forgiven Jefferson for receiving him on one occasion in carpet slippers. He disliked Jefferson personally, and Madison quite as much, for Madison had a dry humor which he sometimes used at Merry's expense. Nothing came of this proposal—if Burr ever made it. Merry asserted that Burr did suggest such a plan, and Merry even sent a confidential messenger to London to advance it.

The Spanish government was outraged over the sale of the Louisiana territory to America. Spain insisted that the sale did not include the area now known as the state of Florida and indeed much of the land to the east of the Mississippi River. American title to these lands remained shaky for some years, and war with Spain to seize them for the United States was openly talked about.

Among those who spoke of such a war was an old friend of Burr's, General James Wilkinson. The two had been together at the attack on Quebec at the start of the Revolutionary War. They had remained fast friends. Another who expected war with Spain was General Andrew Jackson, who was later to become President of the United States. He too was on friendly terms

with Aaron Burr. And even Jefferson himself did not discount the prospect of having to fight Spain for the Floridas, as they were called.

It seemed to Burr that a man of determination could assemble a regiment on the western frontier, and if war with Spain broke out, make a lightning attack on Mexico—that is, the region which later became the state of Texas. With such an attack he, Burr, might win glory for himself, and land as well.

Another plan of Burr's, according to British sources, was to raise an army of 50,000 men, with British money, sail from New Orleans in a small fleet, and, landing at Vera Cruz, attack Mexico. Britain was at war with Spain at this point, and was interested in any help she could get from American adventurers against Spanish possessions in the New World. Nothing came of this plan either.

Burr's restless imagination produced still another plan—election to the Congress by some of the frontier districts of Kentucky and Tennessee. On the frontier his duel with Hamilton wouldn't count against him. He had a chance of being elected and might still redeem his future as a member of Congress. Plans, plans, plans. Burr's questing mind seemed to produce one a week, and the development of a new plan did not necessarily mean he had deserted an old one.

Thinking, then, of election to Congress and a war with Spain and an expedition against Spanish territory and perhaps even of establishing a new nation in the West, Burr went to Pittsburgh and then by boat down the Ohio, buying for the purpose a huge ark of a boat for which he paid $130.

He came in his journeys to Blennerhassett Island on the Ohio—three miles long and very narrow, and in the middle of the river. On this island Mr. Harman Blennerhassett of England and Ireland had built himself a huge house and decided to devote his life to philosophy and scientific study. Burr landed and was welcomed to the island by Mrs. Blennerhassett, her husband being away, and stayed there for dinner and then went on to Cincinnati.

He journeyed on down the river to Louisville, Lexington and Nashville, speaking with the leaders of the communities where he stopped. At Nashville he met General Andrew Jackson. A parade was organized in his honor. He was made the hero of the town,

for the Westerners believed that Aaron Burr, Revolutionary War hero and former Vice President of the United States, would lead them to victory against the Spanish, at whose hands they had suffered severe financial losses.

In all his talks with others, Burr touched on the prospect of leading an expedition against Mexico, but always provided that the United States went to war with Spain. Andrew Jackson had Burr as a guest at his plantation in Tennessee, the Hermitage, and said that if Burr should need his services in the future, he would have them. After leaving Jackson, Burr met his old friend General James Wilkinson, who had been appointed Governor of the portion of the Louisiana territory which lay above the 33rd degree of latitude. His headquarters were in St. Louis. Burr discussed with Wilkinson the prospect of an expedition against Mexico, and Wilkinson was enthusiastic about the plan. Always, of course, provided the United States and Spain declared war, the one on the other.

Burr did not know, when he spoke with Wilkinson, that his friend had for years been in the pay of Spain and had received, or was receiving, a substantial pension from the Spanish King as a Spanish agent.

Burr, after many discussions with Wilkinson, continued on down the river until he came to New Orleans, where he stayed some time as a guest of Daniel Clark, the most prominent American in that city and a close friend of Wilkinson's. Burr then returned up river, called on General Jackson again, met General Wilkinson at St. Louis, called again at Blennerhassett Island and returned toWashington.

In Washington he made a call on President Jefferson and was invited to dinner. He spoke of his western journey to Jefferson, who was deeply suspicious about what Burr had been up to in his travels. Rumors were already circulating of a plot linking Burr with the Spanish in an attempt to get the western territory to secede, and another plot in which Burr with the help of the British would lead an attack by western settlers on Spanish territory. That these two proposals were contradictory did not, somehow, make them unbelievable.

Jefferson believed that Burr was capable of adopting either plan, depending upon which best served his purpose. After that

dinner, Jefferson pondered for a long time Burr's real purpose in journeying down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers as far as New Orleans. Burr had no interest in geography, zoology or botany. His only interest was in power, and Jefferson concluded that Burr's journey involved a play for power, and possibly a treacherous play for power. He would watch him.

Burr, meanwhile, with his host of schemes, to none of which he had actively committed himself, was playing with disaster and thought he was playing with fortune. The Spanish ambassador at Washington, Don Carlos Yrugo, decided that Burr was dangerous and set out to bring him down. He sent to the *Gazette of the United States*, the leading Federalist paper, an anonymous article asking a series of questions about Burr. "How long will it be before we shall hear of Colonel Burr being at the head of a Revolutionary Party on the western waters?" one article asked, and went on to expose in the form of questions all the plans and hopes of Burr's questing mind—the attack on Mexico with British help; an attack on Spanish possessions in the West with a party of adventurers; the carving out of an independent country for himself beyond the Mississippi.

In fact, the Burr Conspiracy, which was, if anything, a series of plans to provide a future for Aaron Burr, became, after Burr's western journey, no conspiracy at all. It was openly talked about both in the East and in the West, and everybody had his own version of what Burr was up to. But in a day when all kinds of scandalous motives were attributed to even the highest men in the land, no serious notice was taken of the talk about Burr for many months.

What brought about Burr's downfall was precisely the change in national affairs for which he had hoped. In 1806 President Jefferson in effect gave Burr's friend, General Wilkinson, a free hand to go to war with Spain.

The circumstances were these. Disputing the extent of the Louisiana purchase, the Spanish moved some troops over to the east bank of the Sabine River, into what is now the state of Louisiana, claiming that this territory was theirs. Jefferson contended that all land east of the Sabine River was American. Spain refused to withdraw her troops, and Jefferson ordered Wilkinson to drive the Spanish to the west side of the river. War with

Spain, then! Just what Burr and Wilkinson had hoped for. The prize of Mexico was theirs.

But Wilkinson grew afraid. He could have attacked the Spanish troops, starting the war in which Burr could recoup his fortunes. He boasted that he would do so. But instead he sent a warning to the Spanish commander. And then Spain unexpectedly capitulated and withdrew her troops. Burr's Spanish war fizzled out.

Burr, however, did not know this. He was hurrying west to put himself at the head of the men he had been gathering for just this opportunity at Blennerhassett Island. He sent Wilkinson a jubilant letter in cipher, the contents of which will never be fully known. The letter was heavily altered by Wilkinson lest it incriminate him. It spoke of the expedition against Mexico, with Burr at its head and Wilkinson second in command, and fortune for all. Then a western newspaper came out with a report linking Burr and Wilkinson in a conspiracy to seize western lands for themselves by force of arms.

Wilkinson, fearful of being found hand in glove with Burr, wrote a letter to Jefferson saying, "A numerous and powerful association . . . has been formed with the design to . . . rendezvous eight to ten thousand men in New Orleans at a very near period and from thence with the cooperation of a naval armament to carry an expedition against Vera Cruz." Wilkinson had decided to protect himself by turning informer.

After the first letter had gone, he quickly sent another to Jefferson to say that the magnitude of the plot staggered his belief. But he sent no names. Then he wrote a third letter protesting that a Kentucky newspaper had accused him of being associated with Burr in the plot of which, as a loyal citizen, he had sent all the details to Jefferson. He was covering up for himself.

He was not through, however, for he sent still another letter in which he said that so many were engaged in the conspiracy that he believed his own force would be wiped out in trying to hold New Orleans unless 2,000 men could be sent him by sea. Wilkinson was trying to panic President Jefferson, yet he would reveal no names and make no direct charges against Burr.

President Jefferson trusted Wilkinson and knew nothing about his having been an agent of Spain. He knew that if there was

indeed a military conspiracy afoot to attack Spain or seize the western territory, Burr was likely to be at the head of it. But he could not proceed against Burr on the basis of the letters written by Wilkinson, for Wilkinson laid no direct charge against Burr.

At a meeting of the Cabinet it was agreed to write confidentially to the Governors of the western states—Ohio, Mississippi, Indiana—and to the district attorneys of Tennessee, Kentucky and Louisiana to ask them to keep Burr under surveillance, and should he commit any overt act of treason or any misdemeanor, to have him arrested. Jefferson couldn't ignore the threat to New Orleans of which Wilkinson had written, and he ordered Captains Preble and Decatur to take command there.

He issued a proclamation warning the people of the United States against taking part in any unauthorized expedition against Spain. But he said not a word against Burr, for he had no evidence against him. Despite his own suspicions, Jefferson would not proceed against any man until he had reasonable evidence of guilt.

But the issuing of the proclamation was the death knell of Aaron Burr and dealt a blow to the powers of President Jefferson himself.

54

AMONG those who wrote to President Jefferson warning him against Burr was Joseph Hamilton Daveiss, who was United States District Attorney for Kentucky. As his middle name suggests, Daveiss was a strong Federalist and therefore politically an opponent of Jefferson's. Nonetheless, he sent the President a letter cautioning that Burr plotted treason and also saying that Wilkinson was in league with Burr and in the pay of Spain, though a commanding officer of the United States Army. When Jefferson received this letter, he took it to Gallatin, deeply troubled.

"What am I to make of this?" Jefferson asked. "These charges

are so serious that if they are true and I ignore them I am endangering the whole country. Yet there is no detail and no proof. Is it possible that the highest officer in the United States Army, General Wilkinson, is actually in the pay of Spain?"

"Mr. President," said Gallatin, "I know Wilkinson. He is extravagant and lives far beyond his means. I haven't a doubt that given an opportunity he would misuse public money or public lands. But I don't think that, in the pinch, he would betray his country. The only thing you can do, since the charges are so serious, is ask Mr. Daveiss for more details."

Jefferson wrote asking for names and dates and incidents and witnesses. But before his letter was a week on its way he had another from Daveiss, who was thoroughly aroused against Burr, listing all the people who were associated with the former Vice President in the alleged conspiracy. The list was long, impressive and incredible. It included John Breckinridge, a close friend of Jefferson's who had worked with him in the past, and Senators John Adair and John Smith, and Judge Sebastian of the Court of Appeals, and Judge Harry Innes, as well as Governor William Henry Harrison. On the heels of this letter came another, listing sums paid to Wilkinson, in proof that he was in the pay of Spain.

These two letters shocked Jefferson. Could it really be true that so many eminent men, many of them personal as well as political friends, were conspiring against the United States—to launch a private war against Spain or to seize part of the Louisiana territory and set up an independent nation? Madison read over the list and gave a little chuckle.

"My, my, how loyal the Federalists are and how traitorous the Republicans," he said. "Here we have a lone Federalist warning us of a widespread and treasonous plot. And who are the plotters? Republicans to a man."

"Put politics aside. Suppose it is true?" said Jefferson. "Think of the danger to the nation."

"Mr. President," said Madison, "there is rarely such a situation as 'politics aside.' How odd that we have one Federalist district attorney in the West warning of conspiracy, and not a single other district attorney giving such a warning. Not a word of warning from a single western Governor. Not a word from any

of our military posts. Only Mr. Daveiss knows all the details. Leave the matter with me, Mr. President. If there is anything in it, I will ferret it out."

No action was taken by President Jefferson or by his Secretary of State, Madison, on the strength of the Daveiss reports. But Daveiss himself decided to take action, for though he was undoubtedly a Federalist, he had been motivated to write to the President by reasons of patriotism, though not perhaps untinged with politics.

In any case, he roused the people to attack Blennerhassett's Island, where, he alleged, a revolutionary army, recruited by Burr, was gathering. No evidence of such an army was found—unless a handful of men with guns could be called an army. Then, as district attorney, he laid formal accusations against Burr, charging him with conspiracy. Burr appeared voluntarily to answer the charges and so impressed the Grand Jury called to conduct the investigation that the charges were dismissed. Daveiss persisted and had another Grand Jury impaneled. Again Burr was found innocent of any plot to destroy the nation, which was the charge laid against him. Daveiss now became convinced that the plot was bigger than Burr and extended to the courts, and he gave up his attempts to send Burr to jail.

General Wilkinson, anxious to prove himself loyal, was arresting people by the score and sending some to Washington for questioning and trial. But of all the people he sent north, none gave any evidence that would stand up in court against Burr.

Then Jefferson's hand was forced with reference to Aaron Burr. In his annual message to the Congress the previous December, Jefferson had made reference to the conspiracy as part of his review of the year 1806. In January, Congressman John Randolph of Roanoke, who was no friend of Jefferson's, saw an opportunity to embarrass the President publicly. He rose in the Congress and referred to that part of Jefferson's message dealing with the conspiracy—the unauthorized military expedition against Spain.

"This is a very grave matter," he said. "It is a very serious matter. But the Congress is warned of a conspiracy without any names being mentioned. On a matter of national concern of this gravity, the Congress should be told all the details. Who are the

conspirators?" He proposed a resolution calling on Jefferson to reveal to the House all the information he had on the subject of the conspiracy.

Jefferson had to produce all his evidence and mention names. But he was determined that the names of men who were innocent and who had been linked with Burr only out of political spite should be protected. He therefore sent the pertinent correspondence to the House of Representatives with a message pointing out that the largest part of his information came in the form of letters, "often containing such a mixture of rumors, conjectures and suspicions, as render it difficult to sift out the real facts and unadvisable to hazard more than general outlines." He gave them only one name—that of Aaron Burr.

Meanwhile, as far as Burr knew, his friend General Wilkinson had opened fire on the Spanish on the Sabine River, or was about to open fire on them, and war was therefore imminent. He had got together a little fleet of barges and was dropping down the Mississippi River with a force of fifty-five men and boys, and a few women and children. For armaments they had muskets and rifles, but no more perhaps than would be carried by a similar number of men going down a frontier river. He got as far as Bayou Pierre in what is now Mississippi, and to his surprise, on anchoring for the night, found himself facing a band of militia who called on him to surrender as a traitor.

After a parley and explanations, Burr agreed to surrender himself to the civil authorities and face whatever charges were brought against him. He did stand a kind of trial, again before a Grand Jury, in Mississippi, and again the Grand Jury could not find enough evidence for an indictment. He was freed. But by now Burr realized that he was in serious trouble. He had three times within a matter of weeks faced Grand Jury investigations. The country was roused against him. Whether he feared he would be shot out of hand, or given some kind of drumhead trial in the backwoods where his rights would not be secure, is not certain. But fearful he was, and he disguised himself as a frontier traveler and fled. But he was recognized, turned over to a troop of soldiers and sent to Richmond, Virginia, where he was put in jail to face trial once more, this time on Jefferson's charges

of conspiracy announced to the Congress—charges Jefferson had been loath to bring.

Once more there had to be a Grand Jury investigation to determine whether there was sufficient evidence against Burr to bring him into court, and if so, on what charge or charges. Two charges were preferred against him before the Grand Jury by the group of lawyers who now represented the government.

The first was that of a misdemeanor in that Burr had plotted an expedition against Spanish possessions without the sanction of the United States government. Nobody took that charge very seriously; in those days the people thought it no harm to attack Spanish possessions. The spirit of the "filibuster" was strong, particularly on the frontier. But there was a great deal of haggling and arguing about the second charge—that of treason—under which Burr was accused of planning to seize, for his own, lands which were part of the territory of the United States.

Chief Justice John Marshall presided at the trial or, rather, the Grand Jury investigation which preceded the actual trial. A greater contest than the trial of Aaron Burr was about to take place. It was a contest between the Judiciary, headed by John Marshall, and the Executive, headed by Thomas Jefferson. At stake was the question of which of the two branches of the government had authority over the other.

In the early stages of the proceedings, Burr's lawyers brought the issue to a head. They demanded that the President be ordered by the court to appear as a witness and to produce all correspondence between himself and Wilkinson, and any others, pertinent to the case.

George Hay, leading the government's case, replied that the court had no power to order the President of the United States to appear before it. Marshall, happy to have such an issue raised, said that he would hear arguments on the legality of summoning the President. Hay sent a horseman galloping through the night to Jefferson in Washington, giving him the news and begging him to forward the documents. If this was done, he believed, the demand for the President's appearance in court would be dropped.

Jefferson decided to send all the documents that were asked for. But he made it clear that he was not acting under an order of

the court, but supplying the papers in the public interest. Furthermore, as President of the United States he reserved the right to decide which papers should be sent to the court and which papers it would be better, in the public interest, to suppress. He also said that he would not, as President of the United States, appear before the court, which, under the Constitution, had no such authority over the President.

Marshall ignored this message, listened to the arguments and then ruled that the President must appear as a witness. He issued a subpoena. Jefferson refused to accept it or to answer it. The next move was up to Marshall. If he wished to press his authority, he must order the arrest of the President. Wisely, Marshall let the issue drop, and the subpoena was not enforced. Neither then could claim an outright victory. But Jefferson was satisfied that he had not yielded to the courts any of the rights he believed were invested in the Presidency by the Constitution.

It took the appearance of General Wilkinson to get the investigation into high gear. Wilkinson took his time traveling from New Orleans to Richmond, and it is doubtful whether he would have appeared in court at all had not Jefferson, who still trusted him, told him that he must do so. He made the poorest witness. John Randolph of Roanoke was foreman of the Grand Jury and had the General writhing in the witness box. Wilkinson admitted that he had altered the cipher letter from Burr—that he had altered it so as not to incriminate himself—and he said he had taken months to decipher it. He only escaped being tried himself by a vote of nine to seven. But his evidence and the letter and the story of Burr getting an armed band together on Blennerhassett Island resulted in the Grand Jury's deciding that Burr must stand trial on both charges, treason and misdemeanor.

The trouble with the trial, from Jefferson's point of view, was that in a sense it had been forced on him. It had been forced on him by the same John Randolph who headed the Grand Jury investigation. Although Jefferson believed that Burr was guilty of treason, he knew that he did not have evidence enough to prove it. And he had not mentioned Burr's name officially in connection with the conspiracy until he had been forced by Randolph to name names.

Weeks, months even, were spent before the trial to collect evidence to convict Burr of treason. Eventually Jefferson be-

lieved that enough evidence had been uncovered. A hundred witnesses for the government were found and sworn in. Besides General Wilkinson there were General William Eaton and Colonel George Morgan, both well-known army men.

Burr was always at his most brilliant when at bay. And he was at bay now, on trial for his life. He was completely composed, cheerful, witty and outwardly confident. And his legal training was such that he was capable of conducting, or leading, his own defense. Thus, when General Eaton took the stand to give evidence which would corroborate intention of treason on Burr's part, Burr addressed a question to Judge Marshall. "Surely it is not correct to bring forth corroborative evidence before the fact of treason itself has been established," he said.

It was a good point, and Marshall allowed the objection as sound. The prosecution, then, had first to establish an open act of treason on the part of Burr. Witness after witness was called to testify concerning Burr's army at Blennerhassett Island. When all the evidence was in, the case was very thin. Burr's lawyers asked Marshall to dismiss the case. They pointed out that not only had no open act of treason been shown beyond all reasonable doubt against Burr, but he himself had not been present on Blennerhassett Island when all the allegedly treasonable activity was taking place.

Marshall took the defense's motion for dismissal under advisement and began to instruct the jury on the meaning of treason as laid down by the Constitution. His analysis destroyed Jefferson's case. "The present indictment charges the prisoner with levying war against the United States and alleges an overt act of levying war. That overt act . . . is not proved by a single witness. The Constitution and law . . . require that the fact [of treason] should be established by two witnesses; not by the establishment of other facts from which the jury might reason to this fact."

The jury retired, to return a verdict of not guilty. This verdict was a heavy blow to Jefferson, who, though he had been forced into the situation, had nonetheless been sure that Burr would be found guilty. He believed that, had the case been tried before any other judge but Marshall, Burr would indeed have been found guilty. He could not believe that Marshall was politically unbiased in his ruling, and so the Aaron Burr Conspiracy deeded to the nation an unresolved, ill-defined episode in American history.

55

As the end of Jefferson's second term neared, he began to sense trouble. It rose out of the hostility of Britain toward the United States, evident in the search of American ships and the seizure of American seamen, who were forced to serve British ships of war on the grounds that they were British subjects. Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin, at Jefferson's request, made a study of the situation and concluded that there were 5,000 British deserters serving on American merchantmen or American warships. That was enough to man six British ships of the line. Indeed, the number was so large that if they were all handed back to Britain, as Britain demanded, both the United States Navy and the American merchant marine would be faced with a serious shortage of manpower.

This number of deserters serving on American vessels was a serious embarrassment to President Jefferson. It provided British officers with an excuse for continuing their searches and the British government in London with justification of a practical sort for their hostile policy.

Jefferson now sent to London James Monroe, his young disciple, to aid in the negotiation of a treaty under which the British would agree to stop searching American vessels and impressing seamen and the United States would resume exports which had ceased under the embargo. These negotiations were extremely difficult, and the whole of the United States awaited the results. To aid Monroe, Jefferson sent William Pinkney. For a while negotiations in London looked hopeful. Then Charles James Fox, the British Prime Minister, died and was succeeded in the negotiations by Lord Holland and Lord Auckland. These two were willing to yield on many points concerning the rights of American merchantmen, but not on the matter of searching ships for deserters and searching American vessels trading with French colonies. Monroe and Pinkney both had clear instructions that

they must get the British to agree not to seize seamen off American ships. Up against a blank refusal on this point, they compromised, ignored Jefferson's instructions and signed a treaty that recognized American rights in almost all areas but this.

Monroe wrote a note to Secretary of State Madison saying that he had concluded a treaty covering all points on which they had negotiated, which unfortunately was not true. The treaty did not reach the United States until two months later, in February 1807. The Congress was in the last days of session. The treaty was rushed to Madison as Secretary of State and he hurriedly looked through the provisions of the document for the clause dealing with impressment. There was no such clause. Madison took the document to Jefferson, who had been ill all day, suffering from one of those severe headaches that plagued him when he was under great pressure.

"What does it say about searching our ships?" Jefferson asked.

"Mr. President," said Madison, "the British yield on many points which are a great benefit to us but there is not a word here about agreeing not to search our ships or seize our seamen."

"Impossible!" cried Jefferson. "Mr. Monroe had explicit instructions on that point."

He fumbled for his glasses, for he was compelled to wear them now, and started reading rapidly through the treaty. It was true. The treaty made no reference to the very point for which he had sent Monroe to England. Jefferson flung the treaty from him. "Take it away," he cried. "I will have nothing to do with that document. I will not present it to the Senate for ratification. I will not submit to this kind of highhanded treatment from England or from any other nation. She does not rule the seas by any other right but that of a bully. I will not submit."

Meanwhile, word that the treaty had arrived had reached the Congress, and the Senate had delayed its adjournment so as to be able to consider the pact. The Senate was in the last day of the session, and the time being ten o'clock at night, had but two hours of life left, for it must adjourn at midnight. The Senators waited, and no message arrived from Jefferson. A group of Senators headed by Samuel Mitchill called for horses and cantered down the frozen road to the White House to ask for news

of the treaty. Jefferson received them with dignity but his face was pale with anger.

"Have you any further communications for the Senate, which approaches adjournment?" Senator Mitchill asked.

"No," said Jefferson shortly.

"But does not the President have a treaty which he wishes to submit?" asked Mitchill.

"Certainly not," cried Jefferson. "I have no treaty to send to the Senate." And his anger was such that the Senators questioned him no further.

Senator Samuel Smith, brother of the Secretary of the Navy, was especially interested in the treaty, for he was engaged in shipping, and under the Nonimportation Act his ships were idle. He left the Senate to question Jefferson about the treaty. Jefferson told him in short order that he, as President of the United States, would stand for no treaty with any power which did not explicitly state that American ships should be free from search and the seizure of their crews. Smith hurried to Madison.

"What is happening here?" he cried. "Surely President Jefferson takes too much on himself, rejecting this treaty out of hand. He should consult first with the Senate."

Madison replied with a little smile. "What is the sense of asking the Senate's advice when the President is determined not to sign the treaty in any case?" he asked. "The Senate could advise and consent to the treaty if it wishes, but Mr. Jefferson will not sign it."

Smith and other Senators who were interested in shipping and suffering financially from the trade war with Britain now started a whispering campaign to force Jefferson to sign the treaty. They said refusal to sign disgraced his own negotiators, among them Monroe. If the British now increased their pressure on American shipping, Jefferson would be to blame, they added. Furthermore, they whispered, Jefferson was rejecting the treaty because he wanted to disgrace Monroe, being fearful that Monroe might contest the Presidency with Madison. Some of this talk got back to Monroe in London, and there was a growing coldness between Monroe and Madison. But Jefferson, by a tactful letter to Monroe, brought peace between the two.

Jefferson had entered his own first term handicapped, as he felt, by the acts of John Adams, who had preceded him. He did

not want James Madison, who had been elected to succeed him, to have his hands similarly tied. So he agreed to the lifting of the embargo against Britain and France three days before his own term expired on March 1, 1809, although there were now signs that Britain was prepared to yield because of the loss of American trade.

Jefferson was sixty-six when he retired from the White House. He remained in Washington to see Madison inaugurated. This time there was an inaugural ball and all the great of the land were present, quite unlike the lonely inauguration of Tom Jefferson for his first term. Jefferson attended the ball, for the first time in many decades freed of the weight of responsibility. A day or two later he set out for Monticello and retirement.

56

THERE were a great many things to do when Thomas Jefferson got home to Monticello, with all his public service behind him, as he believed. But the work that lay ahead was the kind of work he loved—improving the buildings and grounds of his own beautiful home, putting more of his land under cultivation, experimenting with the rotation of crops to get the best harvests and constantly making notes on rainfall and weather.

Added to this, there was a huge pile of correspondence to deal with every day. Jefferson's mail was enormous, and though some came from old friends, the greater part of it was from strangers—wishing him well, asking him for advice or information and sometimes submitting papers on scientific speculation or manuscripts of whole books for his criticism. Jefferson never ignored a letter, even an unsolicited letter from a stranger. Each piece of mail was answered, and when the manuscript of a book was enclosed, Jefferson read the book through and gave his opinion of it. Some of his letters ran to many pages, so a great deal of time had to be spent at his writing desk, just keeping up with his mail.

People felt about Jefferson as though he belonged to them and

they had a right to call on him, even without notice. They arrived in carriages or on horseback, expected to meet him and to take up some of his time, and Jefferson received them and often put them up at Monticello, where some stayed a day or two and some stayed a week or two—all at his expense.

Before leaving office, he wrote to his friend Samuel Dupont de Nemours in Paris, saying, "Never did a prisoner, released from his chains, feel such relief as I shall on shaking off the shackles of power. Nature intended me for the tranquil pursuits of science, by rendering them my supreme delight. But the enormities of the times in which I have lived have forced me to take a part in resisting them, and to commit myself on the boisterous ocean of political passions." In a postscript to the letter, he made a characteristic request. If M. Dupont de Nemours was returning to America, could he bring with him two French sheepdogs? Sheep raising, he said, was becoming increasingly important in the American economy, and sheepdogs were badly needed.

Before Jefferson retired, his grandson Thomas Jefferson Randolph was ready to go to Philadelphia, where he was to study under a tutor. Jefferson saw himself reborn in the boy, and remembered with what hopes and fears he had left his own home fifty years before to study law at Williamsburg. He went over the contents of the boy's trunk himself, to see that he had everything he would need. He made a note of things like extra cravats and stockings that should be bought and took the boy with him on a shopping trip to get what was needed. And he let the boy pick his own styles of cravat and colors of stockings, dimly aware that what had been fashionable among young bucks fifty years before might not be quite acceptable now.

He wrote to the boy frequently, letters that might be taken for lectures if the concern and love behind them were not so apparent. Jefferson had a fault in dealing with children. It lay in the conviction that all children should be as he had been, and that all children could, if they tried hard enough, be Thomas Jefferson or greater. So he wrote to his grandson, whom he always called "Jefferson," telling him to stay out of arguments, telling him to make a note of all that he heard in his lectures from his teachers, telling him that he must write once a week giving a summary of the lectures he had heard during the previous week,

telling him to cultivate an attitude of good humor and telling him to treat ill-tempered and rude people as if they were patients in need of medical attention.

Many of the letters to his grandson were written while Jefferson was still President, in the last months of his term. He knew that life might be hard for a boy whose grandfather was President of the United States and thus widely blamed for all the ills of the country. But he told young Jefferson not to be put out. The country at large and not the loud critics would decide in time whether he, Thomas Jefferson, was a villain or a patriot. Meanwhile, the boy should choose his society with care and avoid "taverns, drinkers, smokers, idlers, and dissipated persons generally." There was a strong bond between grandfather and grandson, but the grandson had a hard time of it, being lectured in letter after letter out of pure concern. The standards Jefferson set were standards that he alone could meet. Thomas Jefferson Randolph tried mightily to do all his grandfather advised, but he could not succeed, though he lived to become eminent and respected in his own right.

Jefferson didn't confine his concern to one grandson. Young Francis Eppes received his share of correspondence, lectures and advice, too. But it was in Patsy's daughter Cornelia that Jefferson found a reflection of his dead daughter Polly, who had been beautiful and altogether captivating. When Cornelia learned to write, she proudly wrote a letter to her grandfather, and just like Polly she was somewhat taken aback by the reply.

"I congratulate you, my dear Cornelia, on having acquired the valuable art of writing," wrote Grandfather Jefferson. "How delightful to be enabled to converse with an absent friend as if present. . . . To this we are indebted for the Iliad, the Aeneid, the Columbiad, the Henriad, Dunciad and now, for the most glorious poem of all, the Terrapiniad, which I now enclose for you." That was a bit overwhelming for a little girl, and Thomas Jefferson knew it, for in the next few sentences he got his letter on to a different level. Another benefit of having learned to write, he told his little granddaughter, was the realization that writing was done with a goosequill. And that should produce in anybody a certain regard for geese. So he was going to send her half a dozen very fine gray geese, and she would be able to make

friends with them and take care of them, and they would provide her with both eggs and pens.

This was a typical Jefferson gift to a child—captivating and with the promise of instruction. Cornelia liked the geese, even though they did have a habit of putting their heads down and charging her. But when they got to know her, she could feed them crusts of bread, in return for which she got the promised goose eggs and feathers for her pens.

Cornelia at that time was staying with her mother at the Randolph plantation of Edgehill. Her little sisters, Virginia and Mary, were staying at Monticello with Jefferson, for he always managed to wheedle a few grandchildren from Patsy to have around him. He sent Cornelia some silkworms and gave one to Virginia and Mary too. It was kept in a box.

"What will it do?" asked Virginia.

"It will make silk."

"How much silk?"

"Lots," said Jefferson. "In fact, as soon as it has made enough silk for a wedding dress for you and another for Mary, you shall both be married."

Being married seemed a wonderful idea, and the little girls tended the silkworm with the greatest care, waiting for silk for their wedding dresses.

Jefferson did not like to spend money on frivolity, yet he was no miser and would spend a great deal for a good horse or good wine or a good clock. Whatever he bought, he bought the best, and he liked most of all to spend money on others rather than on himself. But he lectured his little granddaughters on the need for economy and told them that, for their future happiness, they must learn to mend their dresses when they were torn or worn, and not spend money on articles which had no real use.

One day one of the little girls, who had on her best party dress, caught it on something as she ran upstairs and the dress was torn. There were tears in her eyes because she knew her dress was ruined and she would have to mend it and wear now, not a new dress, but a mended one. The tears were not lost on Thomas Jefferson. A few days later he came to his little granddaughter with a parcel in his hand. "I have been mending your dress for you," he said. Inside the parcel was a lovely new party dress he had bought in Charlottesville.

Another of his granddaughters wanted very much to buy a Spanish guitar which belonged to a wealthy neighbor. But she knew that it would cost a lot of money—she would never get it. She found it one day in a corner of a living room at Monticello, bought by her grandfather and left there for her.

Two years after he retired from the Presidency, Thomas Jefferson's health was better than it had been when he left office. His hair was white but his eyes were bright. His back was straight and he walked and rode with vigor. He spent five or six hours a day in the saddle going around his lands, and he rose in the morning with the first light. He was happy and optimistic about the future, and there was only one source of sadness in his life—his old quarrel with John Adams.

For ten years these two old friends who had fought side by side for independence in the old Continental Congress had not exchanged a word. Sometimes, after dinner, in the quiet of his study, Thomas Jefferson would sigh over the book he was reading, and his family knew he was thinking of John Adams and wondering how he fared. He missed Adams more and more as the years went by. They were both getting old, and there were not many years left.

57

Dr. Benjamin Rush was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and had been since 1776 a close friend of Thomas Jefferson. He had been a friend, too, of Washington. But during the Revolutionary War Dr. Rush discussed with several others Washington's continuing defeats and debated whether it would not be better to replace Washington with General Charles Lee.

When Washington heard of this, his friendship with Rush ended. Rush was seeking only the best for his country and was mistaken in his view of Washington. But the breach between the two men was never healed, and from that day forward they neither spoke nor wrote to each other. Rush suffered greatly from this, and so perhaps did Washington. Perhaps because of his

own deep misunderstanding with Washington, Dr. Rush was greatly concerned about the coldness that existed between Jefferson and Adams. Here were two great men of the Revolution, two who had struggled like giants in the cause of liberty when liberty was called, by many, treason and was a hanging offense. Side by side they had battled to secure the freedom of the colonies. And then they had quarreled, and as the years went by, the quarrel showed no sign of being put aside.

In January 1811, Dr. Rush decided to try to reconcile the two great men. He wrote to Jefferson, relying on his own friendship, and asking for forgiveness for trespassing in a painful and private area. He expressed his regrets that Jefferson and Adams had fallen out and his deep hope that they might yet be reconciled. Jefferson was ready for reconciliation, for he missed Adams greatly. He wrote back in warmest terms to Rush, saying of Adams, "No man was ever truer than he was . . . to those principles of rational Republicanism which . . . dictated all our efforts in the establishment of a new government. And although he swerved afterwards towards the principles of the English Constitution our friendship did not abate on that account."

Rush had already written to Adams, with whom he was also in correspondence, and learned that Adams bore no animosity toward Jefferson. The difficulty was to get one to drop a line to the other. Adams believed that Jefferson had deprived him in a somewhat underhand way of a second term as President by running for the office himself, though he was at the time Adams' Vice President. Jefferson believed that Adams had handicapped him by appointing judges, and in particular Chief Justice Marshall, whose political views were opposed to Jefferson's own. These wrongs rankled with both men, and neither was prepared to write the first letter to the other.

For a while the matter rested and no progress was made. Then a neighbor of Jefferson's, one Edward Cole, traveled to Boston, carrying with him a letter of introduction to Adams signed by President Madison. Cole was secretary to Madison and was received by Adams warmly and indeed stayed several days with him. They talked together in the evening of the events that had led up to the Revolution, and of Adams' term as President. After a while the conversation reached the point of Jefferson's election,

and Adams explained the various judicial appointments he had made. His explanation was so different from what Cole had heard from Jefferson at Monticello that he told Adams how Jefferson had viewed the matter.

On hearing Jefferson's side of the story, Adams was startled, for he had not meant to interfere with Jefferson's administration. He was delighted to hear that even when Jefferson had been outraged by the appointments he had spoken privately of Adams with respect and love. Adams was silent for a while, thinking of the bitter misunderstanding which had arisen between him and Jefferson and how, despite it all, he revered Jefferson and Jefferson, it seemed, revered him. Finally his dry, self-sufficient New England nature broke and he said to Cole, his voice a little unsteady, "I always loved Jefferson and still love him."

When Cole returned to Monticello he reported this conversation to Jefferson, and Jefferson was deeply moved by it. He wrote immediately to Benjamin Rush, saying,

> I only needed this knowledge to revive towards him [Adams] all the affections of the most cordial moments of our lives. . . . I knew him to be always an honest man, often a great one, but sometimes incorrect and precipitate in his judgments; and it is known to those who have ever heard me speak of Mr. Adams that I have ever done him justice myself and defended him when assailed by others, with the single exception as to political opinions.

Rush took the liberty of quoting these feelings of Jefferson's to Adams. Adams wrote back to him that he could see that the Doctor was trying to tease the two of them into writing to each other, the inference being that Adams would not be coaxed in this way. When Dr. Rush received this letter, he believed he had failed to reconcile the two men. But he was quite wrong. Unknown to him, John Adams, on New Year's Day, 1812, being then seventy-six years of age, sat down at his desk to swallow his pride and write to Thomas Jefferson. He opened his letter with a joke—which Jefferson missed. The letter read:

> Dear Sir:
>
> As you are a friend to American manufactures under proper restrictions, especially manufactures of the domestic

kind, I take the liberty of sending you by the post a packet containing two pieces of homespun lately produced in this quarter by one who was honored in his youth with some of your attention and much of your kindness.

The letter went on to say that his family was well, his daughter just recovered from a painful operation, and to wish Jefferson many Happy New Years. It concluded:

I am, sir, with a long and sincere esteem, your friend and servant,

John Adams

Without waiting for the "pieces of homespun" to arrive, Jefferson picked up his pen with zest, to write a dissertation to Adams on the homemade products of Virginia. He was embarrassed to discover later that Adams' "homespun" consisted of two volumes of lectures by his son, John Quincy Adams. But it didn't really matter. The icy silence between the two men had been thawed out by the affection of their friend, Benjamin Rush. Jefferson went on in his first letter to Adams to describe his own life:

You and I have been wonderfully spared, and myself with remarkable health and a considerable activity of body and mind. I am on horseback three or four hours of every day; visit three or four times a year a possession I have ninety miles distant, performing the winter journey on horseback. I walk little however, a single mile being too much for me; and I live in the midst of my grandchildren one of whom [his granddaughter Anne] has lately promoted me to be a great-grandfather.

I have heard with pleasure that you also retain good health and a greater power of exercise in walking than I do. But I would rather have heard this from yourself, and that writing a letter like mine full of egotisms and of details of your health, your habits, occupations, and enjoyments, I should have the pleasure of knowing that in the race of life you do not keep in its physical decline the same distance ahead of me which you have done in political honors and achievements. . . .

Jefferson's letter took only eight days from Monticello to Braintree—which amazed Adams, for he had expected two or three months to go by before he got a reply. He wrote immediately to Jefferson, and a steady correspondence developed between the two. They exchanged more than 160 letters, and in so doing, greatly enriched Western literature and thought, for their letters dealt with politics, linguistics, literature, philosophy, science, agriculture, anthropology—a whole encyclopedia of subjects.

But Adams was New England bred and even in the reconciliation would speak his mind whatever the risk. When in their correspondence they got onto political matters, Adams thundered at Jefferson about the Republican mobs that had taken possession of the streets of Philadelphia in the old days, so that he (Adams) had had to barricade himself in his house, while, he supposed, Jefferson was serenely indulging in philosophical thoughts and encouraging the mobs. Jefferson ignored these passages. If he referred to them at all, it was only to dismiss them with a graceful quote in Greek or Latin to prove to John Adams that he wasn't the first man in history (nor was he likely to be the last) to barricade himself against a mob. He delighted in discussing religious matters with Adams, trying to smoke him out on his beliefs. And he said himself that, viewing his life, with all the sorrows he had seen, he felt there was more good than evil in the world, and the design of life tended toward human happiness.

Adams was not, of course, Jefferson's only correspondent. Jefferson received letters from and wrote to the liberal Emperor Alexander of Russia, the great Polish patriot Thaddeus Kosciusko, who had played a prominent part in the Revolutionary War on the side of the colonies, to the Marquis de Lafayette and a host of others. He received well over a thousand letters a year, and on his death his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, found 26,000 letters that Jefferson had received and 16,000 copies of his replies.

One day, as Jefferson was descending the stairs that led to the entrance hall in Monticello, one of the steps broke beneath his weight and he pitched forward to the floor. He got up by himself but discovered that he had broken his right wrist. Years before, when he was a young man, he had broken his left wrist in a fall in Paris, and this had put an end to playing the violin—his favorite

pastime. The wrist had always been stiff. Now, with his right wrist broken, he had to give up his correspondence for a time. But he would not give up his riding. He had his favorite horse Eagle brought around for him every day, and with his arm in a sling, set off for his ride around his estates.

Eagle was a spirited gelding; even the grooms had trouble handling him. But Jefferson never hesitated to ride him. In fact, he never hesitated to ride any horse, and if a horse was wayward or rebellious, he would apply the whip liberally until the animal was gentle. But, as he explained to his grandson, there was a line to be drawn between mastering a horse and being cruel to a horse. And he would not tolerate cruelty to any animal.

In view of his deep love for horses, and indeed his love for all nature, it is a curious fact that Thomas Jefferson did not like dogs. He did not like them because he could not see that they performed any good in the world. True, there were watchdogs and sheepdogs, and for these he had some regard. But dogs as pets, or dogs for hunting, he could not abide, and once he told his fiery son-in-law, Thomas Mann Randolph, that if he had his way, he would enact a law providing for the shooting of all dogs. In his view, they devoured food but produced nothing.

"Shoot dogs?" cried Randolph. "By thunder, sir, if anyone shot a dog of mine, I'd kill him with my bare hands." Randolph was one of the hunting gentry of Virginia and kept and cherished several packs of hounds. Jefferson, wisely, made no reply.

Jefferson set aside a part of the afternoon of each day to spend with his grandchildren, and busy as he was, he always had something special planned for them. One day it would be a race on the lawn. All the grandchildren were to race to a certain mark and then back to him. But since there was a great difference in their ages, the younger ones were put ahead of the older on the starting line. He worked out carefully just how many yards of advantage were to be given to each, according to his age, and started the races himself, counting up to three very slowly and then dropping his handkerchief. He gave out prizes, but since he was quite incapable of disappointing a child, everybody had to get a prize. So he gave three dry figs to the first, two dry figs to the second, and one dry fig to the third. This meant that there could be only three children in any one race, because four dry figs would probably make the winner sick.

Sometimes he announced to his grandchildren that on the following day they were going to plant flowers. They liked bulbs best, particularly tulips. Every bulb looked the same, but they all had wonderful names like "King of the Golden Mine" and "Queen of the Amazons" and "Roman Empress." The children were delighted with these names and gathered to watch the bulbs being put in the ground. Then a little wooden label was put beside each bulb, with the name of the bulb. Those children who could write were allowed to write the names. After that, every day without fail, Thomas Jefferson led his grandchildren each morning to the place where the bulbs were planted. Every day they examined the ground carefully and came away disappointed because there was nothing to be seen. And then one day there would be a little jade-green sprout peeping above the ground. And then there were cries of delight and excitement and a hundred questions about when the "King of the Golden Mine" would appear as a flower and what colors the "Roman Empress" would show. When the flowers were all blooming, Jefferson loved to look at them with his grandchildren and plan new groupings and contrasts for next year's flower bed.

He was quite good at first-aid and was never annoyed when one of his grandchildren came to him in his study to have a splinter removed from a finger. On one occasion he probably saved the life of a Negro slave belonging to a neighbor. The man had cut his leg with an ax and was bleeding heavily from the wound. His master sent for a doctor, but Jefferson suggested that by the time the doctor arrived, the slave might be dead, but he, Jefferson, could perhaps do something for him himself. He went to the cabin where the slave was. He got a needle and a silk thread, calmed the man, and sewed up the wound and then bandaged the leg. His surgery was successful and the slave recovered. But the incident set Jefferson's inquiring mind to work and he remarked to the man's master that it was odd that the heavy muscles of the human body, which were a kind of protection for the bones, were all placed in the rear, though most blows were received from the front.

"Heavens," said the man later to a friend, "what a fellow Thomas Jefferson is. Why, he is prepared to suggest improvements in the work of God Almighty Himself."

58

THE war with Britain which Tom Jefferson had spent his second term trying to avoid broke out during the Presidency of James Madison. To no small extent it resulted from a lack of ready communication between the American delegates in London and the President in Washington.

Jefferson's embargo was lifted by Jefferson himself before he left office, so that Madison might be free to apply his own measures to bring Britain to terms. His negotiators in London had finally got the British to agree to modify their search and seizures of American vessels. Both sides were close to a treaty which would preserve peace. But Madison's news from London was always several weeks old. The last messages he had received spoke of deadlock and an unreasonable British attitude, so in June 1812 Madison signed the congressional bill declaring war on Britain.

The United States had no navy other than a squadron of frigates. The British fleet could dominate the American coastline and landed an expeditionary force which sacked Washington and burned the Capitol. Bullet holes in the White House to this day testify to the savagery of the British attack, which was capped by the burning of the books that constituted the Library of Congress. Jefferson, to repair this loss, offered to the nation the contents of his own vast library, collected over a period of forty years. His books were so well chosen that his offer was accepted, and Jefferson's private library became the nucleus of the vast Library of Congress which is today the largest library in the world. He received from the nation, in return for his books, about $75,000—a very large sum in those days—but no one considered it an overpayment in view of the excellence of Jefferson's volumes. Jefferson needed the money, for his financial affairs were in a very bad way.

Jefferson constantly hoped that by cultivating more of his

acreage he would be able to cover his expenses. It was the vainest of hopes—the one area in which Jefferson, who could see all else clearly, deceived himself. He made careful notes of every penny he spent personally. He had a day book in which he noted down little items like a few shillings paid for transportation of firewood, or to a ferryman as a fee for crossing a river, or to a blacksmith for shoeing a horse. He knew very well how to look after the pennies. But he had little concept of how to look after the pounds.

Eventually, with his debts mounting year after year, his creditors became more and more desperate and pressed for payment. He was at this time so poor in ready money that he could not have the chairs in the dining room at Monticello re-covered. They were beautiful chairs, originally covered with a silk brocade. This had long ago worn through and now the horsehair stuffing stuck out of the seats on all sides. Guests sat down to a table on which the dinnerware might be silver—the greater part of it gifts from friends. The menu would feature excellent French cooking, but the food was grown at Monticello and cost nothing. But they sat on chairs so dilapidated that they would have disgraced a boardinghouse.

Jefferson's debts, even after the sale of his books, amounted to something like $60,000, and they had to be settled. He had placed his affairs in the hands of his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, but his grandson could no longer appease the creditors.

Jefferson wrote to the Virginia legislature to ask permission to dispose of Monticello by lottery. His grandson took up the details of the lottery with J. C. Cabell, who agreed with the others that a bill should be drawn up that would allow Jefferson to sell lottery tickets for Monticello. It was the only way he could think of to get enough money to satisfy his creditors and leave enough left over to take care of him for the rest of his life.

Some of the members of the legislature suggested an alternative idea—a loan of $80,000, free of interest, from the state of Virginia. This would be in return for his great services to his state and his country. But this idea was voted down. Even the lottery met with opposition because the legislature was afraid of setting a precedent. Although the lottery bill was finally passed, by this time the whole nation had been roused to the fact that Thomas

Jefferson, writer of the Declaration of Independence and champion of liberty, was almost penniless. The Mayor of New York held a meeting and without any effort raised $8,500 from the people of the city for Thomas Jefferson. Philadelphia sent $5,000 and Baltimore $3,000. Enough was raised to hold off the creditors, and Monticello was saved, at least for Jefferson's lifetime. It had to be sold later, however.

Jefferson was overwhelmed by these gifts of money from his fellow countrymen. He said, "Not one cent of all this is wrung from the taxpayer. It is the pure and unsolicited offering of love."

Life had now come full circle for Thomas Jefferson. His name had been on everyone's lips when he wrote the Declaration of Independence. Then had come the time in the bitter days of the French Revolution when he had been called "Mad Tom" and cartoons had shown him trying to tear down the Republic. Now he was once again cherished by the nation, rescued by the very people whose liberty he had himself saved. But Thomas Jefferson, with Monticello saved, had one more gift for his country.

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JEFFERSON had been interested in education all his adult life. He saw in it the instrument by which democracy could really be made to work at its best. As a young man, elected to the old Virginia House of Burgesses, Jefferson had seen that all government lay in the hands of the wealthy. He opposed this, though of the wealthy class himself. His opponents pointed out that wealthy men were educated men. What kind of government, they demanded, could be expected of men of no education? It was entirely fitting that government should be the instrument of wealth, for poor people were too ignorant to be given any power.

These arguments angered Jefferson, and once, when told that it was the will of God and a law of nature that the aristocracy should rule, he cried, "I recognize only one aristocracy, sir—the aristocracy of the mind. Let higher education be general and then

let us select our representatives and our lawmakers from those of the highest education and the best character."

"Your revolutionary ideas will destroy our country," he was told. "Government must be in the hands of those who through the generations have learned to govern. Your newfangled ideas will ruin us all."

"Newfangled?" echoed Jefferson. "Why, sir, what I propose is at least a thousand years old. Have you not read that Charlemagne scorned those of his nobles who could not read and write, and said of them that they were not fit to rule? My ideas are old-fashioned—not newfangled. But you and your kind are a thousand years behind Charlemagne."

He tried at this time to get some kind of bill passed in the House of Burgesses which would provide the equivalent of university education for poor students whose school records and characters were good. He did not believe in a college education for everybody—that was to be a privilege reserved for the deserving. But his fellow legislators regarded Jefferson's plans as visionary and indeed not of great importance. And nothing was done.

Jefferson, however, never abandoned his ambition to make college education available to people of brains rather than just to people of wealth. And when he retired to Monticello he busied himself in drawing up a master plan for education in his native state, Virginia. He hoped his plan would become national, and he consulted Madison about it, and Monroe too, and kept them informed of the details. He expected and got their support, for Madison was as enthusiastic about the spread of education in America as Jefferson was himself.

Jefferson's plan fell naturally into three parts. The first concerned itself with what we now call grade school. Here children would learn the three R's—reading, writing and 'rithmetic—and geography as well. He thought geography was important because America was neither fully explored nor fully surveyed. American children should learn all they could, then, about the geography of their country. This elementary schooling he proposed should be free to everyone, the cost paid by the government. The idea was so revolutionary that it raised a storm and some said Thomas Jefferson was losing his mind in his old age. "Have the govern-

ment pay for a child's education?" they asked. "Why, Jefferson will be asking that the government pay for a child's clothing next." But Jefferson held the remarkable concept that as the citizen owed something to his government, so the government owed something to the citizen. It was the duty of the government, Jefferson said, "to provide that every citizen . . . should receive an education proportioned to the conditions and pursuits of his life."

He hated laws that interfered with individual freedom—that took over a man's private life and put it entirely at the disposal of the government. And now he came up against a problem of law with reference to his plan for free education for all. Should it be not only free but compulsory? If the government was paying the bill, should the government also have the right to demand that every child go to school, whether the parents wanted it or not?

Jefferson, after a struggle, decided that the government should not have this power. The government should not have the right to force benefits on people—to play "Big Brother" and in so doing reduce the area of private freedom. He put his views on the subject into writing, saying: "It is better to tolerate the rare instances of a parent refusing to let his child be educated, than to shock the common feeling and ideas by forcible asportation and education of the infant against the will of the father." ("Asportation" is a word that has fallen into disuse and means taking someone somewhere.)

Jefferson really believed that most parents would want their children educated. But when, several decades later, free public schooling was provided in the United States, many parents did not welcome it at all. Their children were needed at home or to help earn money. Child labor laws, controlling and then banning the employment of children in mines and factories, had to be passed first, and even then, education had to be made not only free but compulsory. But Jefferson could not foresee the problems of an industrial revolution which was scarcely a glimmer in his time.

After grade school came high school, which was also to be financed by public funds. Here students were to be taught the sciences and languages as a preparation for professional life. Not everybody, however, would go to high school. Students would

be selected, and the most promising only would be admitted. Following high school came the university, and Jefferson had strong ideas on what a university should teach. It should offer what he called "useful" knowledge—that is, those branches of science with which the students could later earn a living. Prominent among them were architecture, music, horticulture, agronomy, medicine, history, religion and law. Each subject would be taught in its own school, the several schools together comprising the university.

All these ideas Jefferson put down in the form of a bill that he persuaded C. A. Cabell, a prominent member of the Virginia legislature, to introduce into that body. But the legislature, as Jefferson thought it would, threw the bill out. They thought it visionary work—the amusement of an active and philosophical mind, but nothing to be taken seriously. When Cabell reported to Jefferson that the bill had been turned down, Jefferson was not disturbed. "The honorable members," he said dryly, "do not generally possess information enough to perceive the important truths, that knowledge is power, and knowledge is also safety, and knowledge is likewise happiness."

He knew himself that knowledge was power, and he knew that, as he possessed more knowledge on education, and many other subjects, than the members of the legislature, he would eventually get the greater part of what he wanted—the university, if not the grade school. But he had to bide his time.

And he planned. He first took the lead by founding a private college at Charlottesville, hard by Monticello, and despite the fact that his dining-room chairs were badly in need of upholstering and his creditors were pressing, he managed to scrape together a thousand dollars as a donation to the college. It was called, first, the Charlottesville Academy and, later, Charlottesville College. Jefferson wanted the name changed from "Academy" to "College." He had a reason.

In 1815 the education fund of the state of Virginia was increased by almost a million dollars—a payment by the federal government to the state of Virginia for the state's expenses in the Revolutionary War. Jefferson had been Governor of Virginia during the Revolutionary War. He had also been Secretary of State when it was agreed that the federal government should pay

off the war debts of the individual states. It was natural therefore that he should be consulted about what was to be done with all this money. And Jefferson advised that it be set up as an endowment, with the interest paid into public education. It took three years and a great deal of planning, persuading and discussion for the scheme to be accepted. But finally, in 1818, the legislature agreed that the money would be so used. The larger part of the interest was to provide scholarships for poor students, but $15,000 a year was to be used for the financing of a state university.

The university that Jefferson had attended, William and Mary at Williamsburg, tried to get hold of this money so that it could expand. But Jefferson fought for the establishment of an entirely new university, and when this was agreed, he was appointed one of the commissioners to select a site. Jefferson had long ago selected a site—Charlottesville, near Monticello, where he would be close to the university and could keep an eye on it—what he really meant was, run it. The commissioners met at a pleasant inn in the lovely Virginia countryside to consider the site of the new university. All had pet sites already picked out, but none was a match for Tom Jefferson, who knew that knowledge was power and now proposed to demonstrate this. He listened intently and without interruption as each proposed his favorite site and presented whatever arguments he could in support of it. When all were done, Jefferson proposed Charlottesville.

"Charlottesville?" cried one. "Why, it's only a little village. It's too far away from everywhere. That would be like putting the university in the wilderness."

"Well, let us consider a few of the factors that should govern the selection of a site for a university," said Jefferson smoothly. "You are all agreed, I am sure, that the site should be healthy, for the health of both faculty and students will be a prime consideration."

"Certainly," said the other commissioners.

"I have been looking into the matter of health as governed by geography," said Jefferson. "I find that on the basis of length of life—certainly a factor in considering the healthiness of any place—Charlottesville is far ahead of any other populated area in Virginia. Here are the figures, gentlemen. You will see from

them that there are more octogenarians living in Albemarle County, in which Charlottesville is located, than in any other county in the state." He passed around the figures, and the point was granted.

"Now," continued Jefferson. "There is the matter of accessibility. Our university should be central, so that students do not have to pass from one end of the state to another to get to it. There will hardly be any disagreement among us on that score." Suspiciously, the other commissioners ceded this point.

Jefferson then produced a cardboard cutout of the state of Virginia. He stuck a pin through the center so that the cutout could be spun freely around the pin. "You will note, gentlemen," said Jefferson after this little demonstration, "that the pin, going through the geographical center of our state, also goes through Charlottesville. So Charlottesville, far from being inaccessible, is actually the true center of Virginia.

"Then there is the matter of population distribution," he continued. "There is not much sense, I agree, having a university in the geographical center of a state if the bulk of the people live many miles away in other parts. But here are the figures on the distribution of population in Virginia. As you will see, Charlottesville is not only the geographical center of Virginia, but the population center as well."

And so he went on, coolly producing fact after fact in favor of Charlottesville, until it was plain beyond all argument that Charlottesville was the ideal location for the new university. The clinching argument was that there was already the nucleus of a university at Charlottesville, the Charlottesville College, which Jefferson had promoted and to which he had contributed a thousand dollars. When he had won the point, Jefferson complimented the commissioners on their choice. "It is a pleasure," he said, "to work with men of sense, who may be swayed by facts but not by oratory or glib argument."

The report of the commissioners then unanimously recommended Charlottesville, only four miles from Monticello, as the site of the university, and six months later, the Virginia legislature approved the site.

Jefferson, now in his mid-seventies, was enormously pleased. He would have a university close to him—a new university whose

every detail he could oversee and manage himself. He meant to oversee all the details too, and the University of Virginia, as it was called, became Jefferson's university in all but name. He drew up all the plans for it himself. The original appropriation was a mere $15,000; Jefferson ignored this. His plans were for a building that would cost nearer to $150,000—no small sum in those days. He refused to be niggardly or design an ugly building for the sake of economy. He was no longer a member of the state legislature, but he had plenty of friends who were and he used them to extract more and more money for the university.

When he had the plans drawn and they were approved, he started recruiting workmen. He practically hired them himself, and he sent to Italy for sculptors, to carve the columns and bas-relief of the marble, for which he had also sent to Italy. He never went to the legislature for a large sum of money—only a few thousand dollars at a time. When someone asked him why he didn't ask for bigger sums, he replied, "Nobody likes to have more than one hot potato put in his mouth at one time." His little sums, demanded or wheedled for over and over again, in the end amounted to a total of $300,000, though the original appropriation for the university, as noted, was only $15,000.

It was a lovely building, graceful and spacious and the most beautiful erected in the United States to that time. Not a detail of it escaped Jefferson's loving care. Every morning he mounted to the cupola of Monticello with his telescope and looked through it down the side of the hill to Charlottesville to see if the workmen were getting on with building "his" university. He visited the brickyards to see if the bricks were being properly made (he could make bricks himself, and those who ran the brickyard soon learned this). He showed the bricklayers how to lay a course quickly and accurately, for he was himself an excellent bricklayer. He once took the chisel out of the hands of one of his Italian sculptors, to show him how to cut a line in the marble with one graceful stroke. The carpenters groaned when they saw him coming, for they knew that every mortise and tenon, every scarf joint and every butt joint would be examined by this terrible overseer who regarded sloppy work as criminal.

Every day after breakfast, Jefferson mounted his favorite thoroughbred, Eagle, and rode the four miles down the mountain

to Charlottesville to watch over the building of his university. And this went on until he was eighty years of age. He still rode with the straight back and easy grace of an expert rider and mounted without any assistance. Patsy began to worry about her father taking this ride alone. Eagle was a spirited horse and Jefferson was becoming frail. If he were thrown or dragged, that would certainly be the death of him. One day she suggested to her father that one of the servants accompany him, in case of accident.

"I appreciate your concern, my dear," said Jefferson. "But I have always liked riding alone. Solitude is part of horsemanship, and if you really insist that someone come with me now, then I will stop riding altogether."

"But supposing some accident should occur?" Patsy persisted.

"Accidents are part of living," said Jefferson. "We can regulate our affairs so as to reduce accidents to a minimum. But we cannot drop all pleasurable activity just for fear of accident."

As might have been expected, he took the greatest pains in choosing the faculty of the university. The choice, of course, belonged to the Board of Visitors, of which board both Madison and Monroe were members. But they realized that their main function was to support Jefferson in his decisions, and they were glad to do this. Jefferson knew every man of eminence in every branch of learning in Europe and was able to command an enormously talented teaching staff. The school of law was his especial concern, and he was determined that whoever taught law in that school should teach it from a Republican point of view. He didn't want any autocratic lawyers or Federalist lawyers teaching the students of *his* university. He wrote to Madison very seriously about this, warning against the Tory influence in teaching law and putting himself on the side of honest Whigs. (Whigs were those who favored a Republican rule. Tories those who leaned more toward rule by an aristocracy.)

Young lawyers, he complained, didn't really know what Republicanism was. They thought they did, but the real spirit was gone from the land, and it must be revived in the law school of the university. It was a curious view, namely that a university school of law must be a source of political nourishment. But in

this, as in so many matters, Jefferson was a realist rather than a theorist. Lawyers might be interpreters of law. But some of them must be makers of laws. He wanted future laws made in a Republican spirit and interpreted from a Republican point of view. It was always his fear that government of the people, by the people, so narrowly won, might perish from the earth.

60

THE time of the harvest had come at last, and Jefferson could look with satisfaction on the reapers. Two of his staunchest disciples in Republicanism had succeeded him to the Presidency—James Madison and James Monroe. The Republican form of government was well established. The old fears that the new freedom, whose singing spirit had been captured in the Declaration of 1776, might be subverted into an autocracy—government by a privileged class—had diminished, though they would never be utterly gone. The country was tremendously enlarged and now its western frontier was no longer the Mississippi River with a foreign nation beyond, but the mountains of the Far West.

With the establishment of the University of Virginia, a start had been made in Jefferson's plans for education of the American people—plans that one day would make a university education available to every citizen of the Republic.

Agriculture was flourishing too. A new kind of farming was being practiced—scientific farming on principles laid down by many great men, among them Thomas Jefferson. The cotton gin, an invention for which Jefferson had issued the patent to Eli Whitney—and Jefferson had encouraged Whitney to market his machine—had revolutionized the southern cotton harvest. And soon Cyrus McCormick would revolutionize the northern grain harvest with a mechanical reaper.

The land was prosperous and filling with people—native Americans and immigrants, whose part Jefferson took, saying

that the sons of liberty should blush to shut the door in the face of others seeking freedom. Iron foundries were operating in the New England states, and coal was being scratched out of the surface seams of Pennsylvania. There was a tremendous carrying traffic on rivers and canals, and it would not be long before railroads, already used in the coal mines of Britain, would be built in the United States. Less than a hundred years from the date of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans would be linked by a railroad.

Thomas Jefferson, entering his eighties, with his mind as bright and as cheerful as ever, seemed to know these things and to be able to see ahead the power, the magnificence and the wholesomeness of the country he had helped to bring into being. But his vision of the years to come was not entirely bright. The one problem he had been unable to solve worried him in his last years.

That was the problem of slavery. He thought of plan after plan to put an end to slavery without hardship either to slave or to slaveowner, but nothing would serve. Almost singlehanded he had secured a law prohibiting the importation of new slaves into the country. Emancipation would bring with it the problem of what to do with the slaves once they were set free. Jefferson, ignorant of conditions in Africa, thought that the slaves ought to be sent back there if freed. For himself, he apprenticed those of his slaves who were willing and intelligent to tradesmen so that they learned a trade by which to earn a living, and then gave them their freedom. Other slaveowners did the same, but that left a large proportion of slaves who were capable only of work in the fields.

In 1820, when the Missouri Compromise was reached on the question of the admission of the states of Missouri and Maine into the Union, Jefferson saw clearly and terribly the shape of things to come. In essence, the compromise said that new states north of the Missouri River should be admitted as non-slave states, and those south of the Missouri as slave states. Jefferson was appalled.

"They have divided the country in two, between slave and non-slave, and thrown away all that we struggled for in our Revolution," he said. He prophesied that with this division forced on the Republic, bloodshed would follow, for men's passions on the question of slavery would not be kept under control. He was

glad, he said, that he would not live to see the terrible result of the division of the country into two such parts.

His university (there was no one who doubted that it was Jefferson's university) was scheduled to open on February 1, 1825—six years after it had been begun. Jefferson was then eighty-two and excited about the opening. But it had to be postponed because not all the faculty had arrived. The opening was held in March, with Jefferson presiding over the ceremonies, as happy as he had ever been in his life. When the university was open, he did not desert it. He invited the professors to dine with him at Monticello two or three times a week, and discussed modern techniques of surgery with Professor Robley Dunglison and mathematics with Professor Thomas Hewitt Key. Both these gentlemen were Englishmen, as were several other members of the faculty. Jefferson had engaged them all, seeking the best. Though he distrusted the British constitution, he had a great love for Englishmen as individuals, and indeed could harbor no prejudice against men of any nation.

On the days that no members of the faculty were dining with him, Jefferson invited some of the students to Monticello for dinner. When they came, he received them individually, talked with each one personally about his studies and his ambitions and his family. But he let them dine at a big table by themselves while he sat off in an alcove to the side. He was getting a little hard of hearing and he did not want to embarrass them with this handicap. And he liked to see them relax and start discussions among themselves, uninhibited by his own august presence. It reminded him of his own young days at William and Mary when he and Dabney Carr had studied Homer and Coke together, and sworn to each other that they would help revolutionize the world. Dabney Carr had died, but Jefferson could fairly claim to have kept his oath.

As the months slipped by, age began to settle heavily on his body, though not on his mind. His hands were crippled with arthritis, and the break in his right wrist due to the fall downstairs at Monticello had not mended well. Writing became painful, but he continued to write.

He wrote mostly to his old friends now—to John Adams in Massachusetts, and to the Marquis de Lafayette. To Lafayette he

said his fingers were crippled and his arm stiff, but while he could make a stroke with his pen, he would not fail to write to him. And a little later, he was delighted to hear that Lafayette was to make a return to the United States, to have a reunion with the Republic he had fought to bring into being, and with Jefferson himself.

Lafayette, when he arrived, received a tremendous welcome in every town. But no scene was more touching than when he arrived at Monticello for his reunion with Jefferson. They had last seen each other over forty years before. Jefferson waited impatiently on the east lawn of Monticello for Lafayette's carriage to arrive. When it came and Lafayette dismounted, he broke into a little shuffling trot, stumbling toward him.

"Ah, Lafayette!" he cried.

"Ah, Jefferson!" cried Lafayette, and they fell into each other's arms. The two old friends talked long together of the days of the Revolution, of Jefferson's days in France, when Lafayette had opened every door in Paris for him, and of the terrible fate that had befallen so many of their friends in the bloodbath that had followed the French Revolution. Then they had to part, and they parted cheerfully, neither acknowledging that they would never see each other again.

Jefferson continued his daily rides, though Eagle now had to be brought around to the terrace in the front of Monticello for his master to mount him. He still refused to have anyone accompany him. He liked the solitude of riding, but at Monticello and in the neighborhood the people contrived to keep an eye open for the frail white-haired man mounted on the big well-muscled hunter. But in the spring of 1826 Jefferson's health began to fail rapidly. He had to go to bed and stay there, too weak to get up and look at his beautiful gardens. Thomas Jefferson Randolph was his favorite grandson and had long before taken over the care of Jefferson's estates. Jefferson called for him and told him quietly that he would soon be dead.

"I am like an old watch," he said, "with a pinion worn out here and a wheel there until it can go no longer." But he was cheerful despite the approach of death; his major concern was that his death should not bring too much grief on his family. His mind

remained clear, and if he suffered any pain, he did not let his suffering show.

He had all his grandchildren and great-grandchildren brought to him—there was a numerous tribe of them—and gave them sound advice about how to conduct their lives, stressing the virtues of honesty and loyalty. He drew up his will and with it made a characteristic tidying up of his life. His library, that is, the library he had got together after donating his earlier library to the Congress, was to go to the University of Virginia. Each of his grandchildren was to be given a gold watch. The girls were to get theirs when they were sixteen and the boys were to wait until they were twenty-one. He gave a gold-headed walking stick to James Madison as a token of fifty years during which they had walked side by side, and he gave freedom to his slave Burell, whom he had trained in the trade of painter and glazier. With freedom went $300 to set him up in business. He also freed two other slaves, John Hemings and Joe Fossett, but their freedom was to come a year after his death, when they would have finished their trade-school training. They were to be provided with the tools of their trade and to be given a comfortable log house on Jefferson's land in which to raise their families.

As June ended, Jefferson began to revert to the time of the Revolution. During the day his mind would be quite clear. But at night his dreams were disturbed, and once he was found sitting in his bed, going through the motions of writing, and he said aloud, "The Committee of Correspondence must be given all these details." He was back, then, in the old days of the struggle against the tyranny of King and Parliament, but this was only during his sleeping hours. When day came, the old memories left him and he talked briskly of his estates and his family.

He had been invited to attend a celebration marking the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, on July 4, but he knew he would be too ill and declined. On July 3 he woke and, confused about the date, said somewhat eagerly to his doctor, "This is the fourth, is it not?" When he learned that it was only the third, he seemed to summon all his energies to live one more day, and in this he succeeded.

Thomas Jefferson died about one in the afternoon of July 4, 1826—the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of

Independence. Far away in Quincy, Massachusetts, his old friend John Adams, dying on the same day and in the same hour, unconsciously pronounced his epitaph.

Adams' last words were: "Jefferson still lives."

Over one hundred and forty years later, what John Adams said remains true.

Jefferson still lives.

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